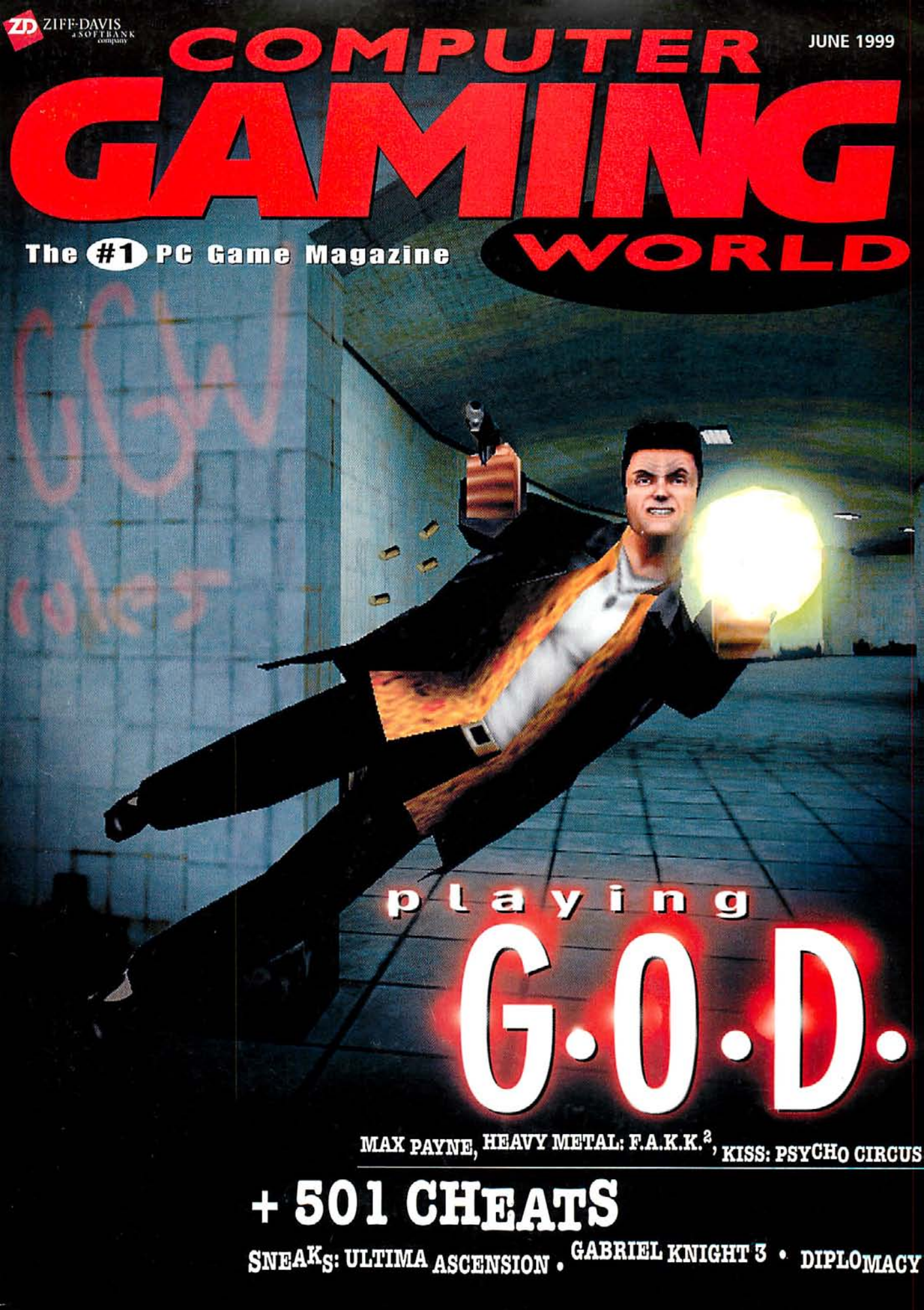
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It is taken.





KoolBear hits the afterburner to chase down Proxi as he tries to escape.

Multiplayer Tip #1

Don't deplete your afterburners cruising around. You'll need them when someone locks on a homer, or when you're trying to catch that guy in front of you. Keep it at 50% or more for that burst when you REALLY need it.



With his Gunboys positioned and ready to attack, Solr Flare lures Maestro into his deadly trap



Big Red receives a warm welcome to the world of D3 anarchy



While Specimen burns, Bama switches to Vauss to finish him off. Napalm, the gift that keeps on giving.



A favorite camper-hunting spot, Sick One catches one off-guard with a homer.

ACTUAL AUTOMAP – POLARIS

Multiplayer Tip #2

Use napalm to herd players into traps. Players have a tendency to back off from napalm bursts (with good reason). Herd them into a wall or corner and launch a frag missile into the wall next to them. The result is quick death for your opponent.

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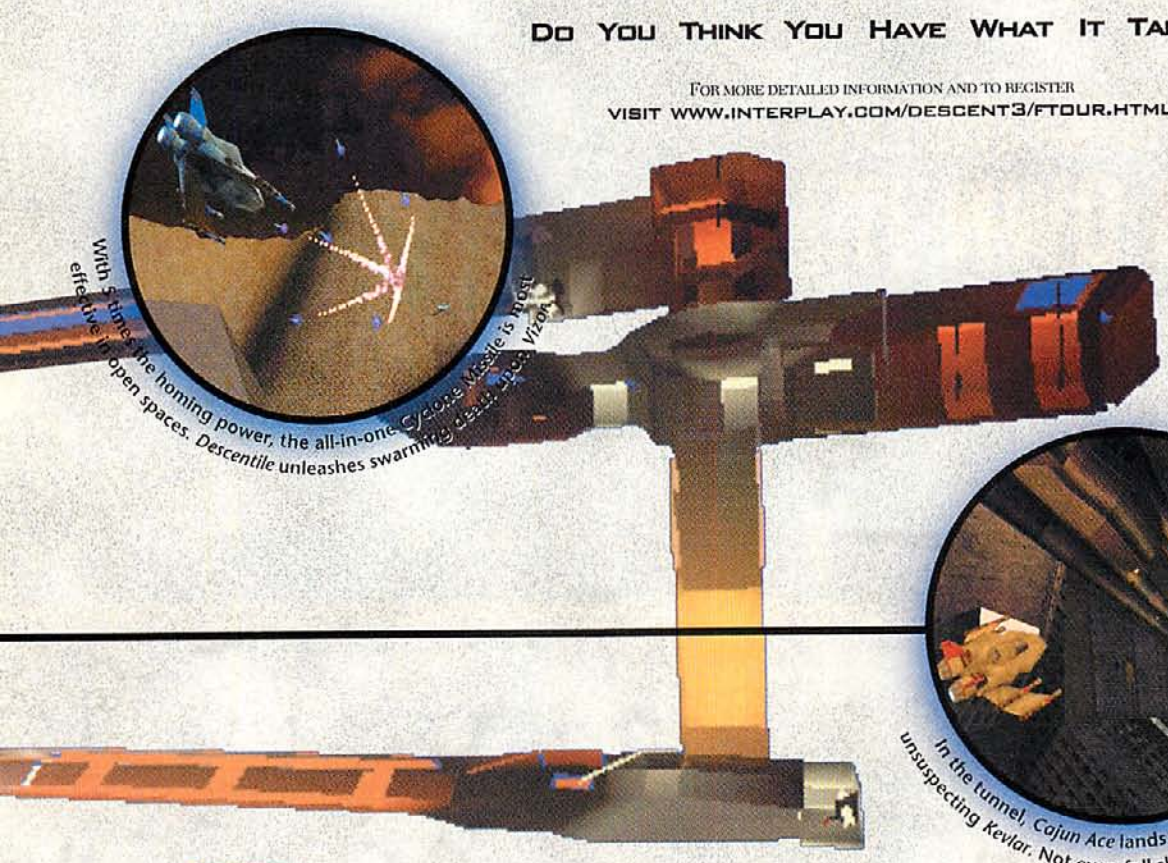
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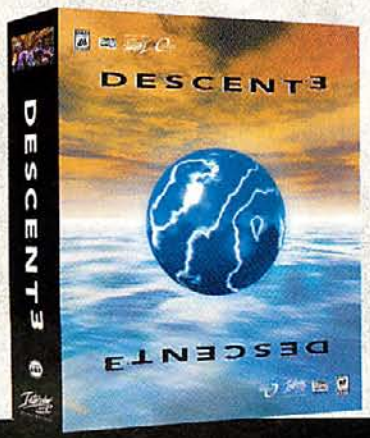
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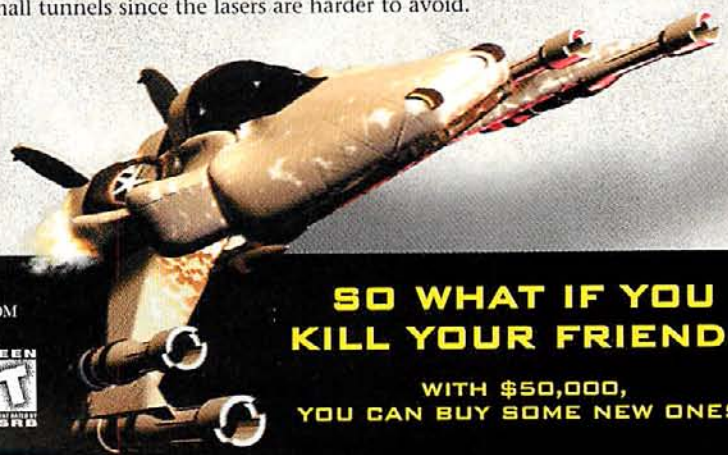


With 5 times the homing power, the all-in-one Cyclone Missile is most effective in open spaces. Descentile unleashes swarming death. Space. Vizon.

In the tunnel, Cajun Ace lands a frag behind an unsuspecting Kevlar. Not even full shields can save him now.



Multiplayer Tip #3
Use Vauss as much as possible in outdoor battles so you can keep a good distance from your opponent. Use Napalm indoors whenever possible and use super lasers against opponents in small tunnels since the lasers are harder to avoid.



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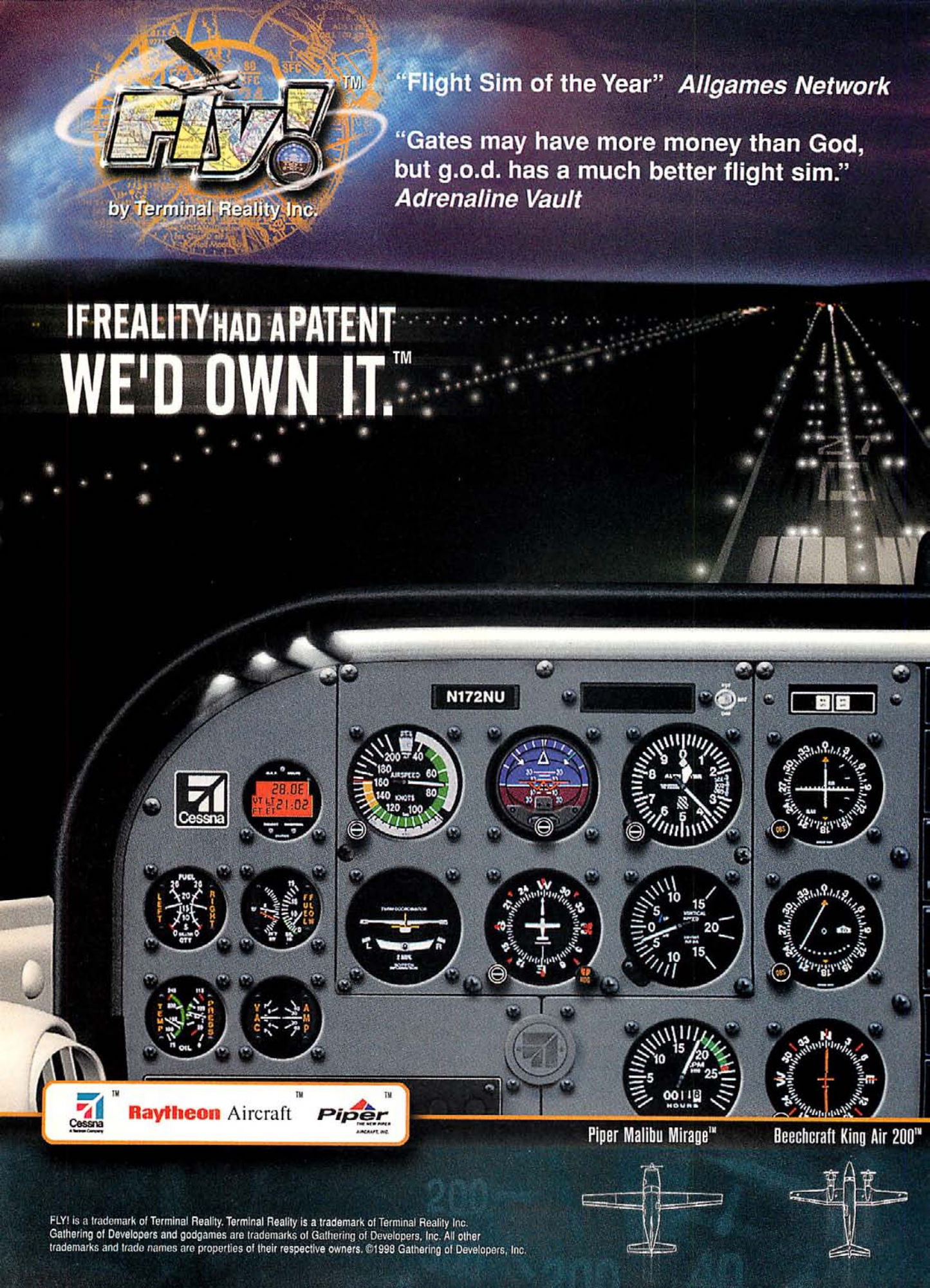
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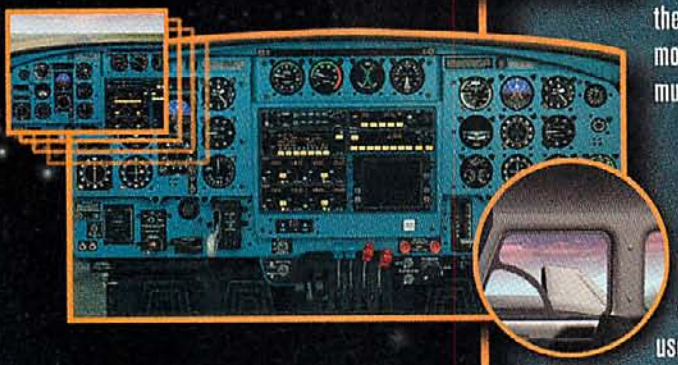
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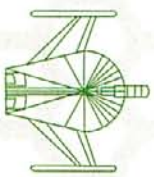
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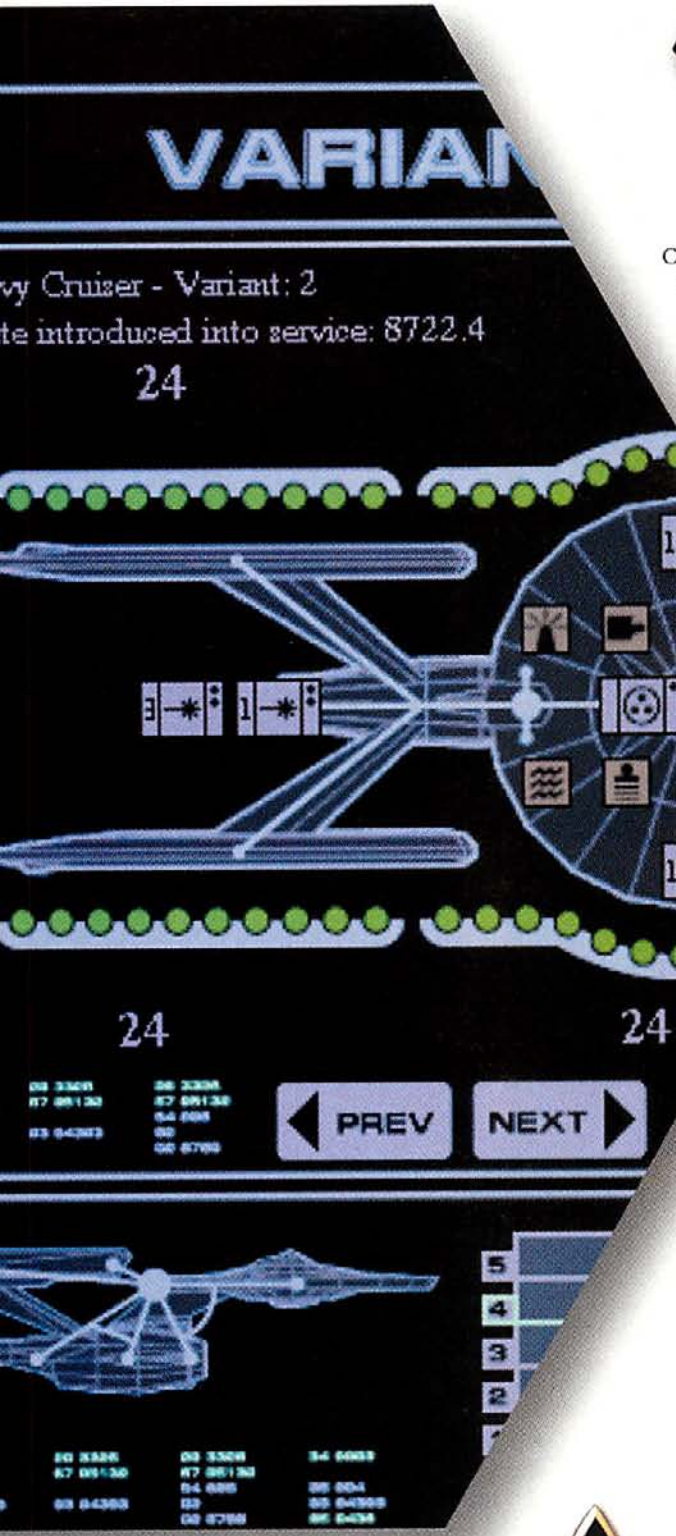
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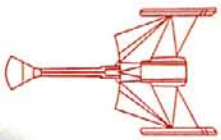
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501 CHEATS

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ALL OF G.O.D.'S CREATIONS



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HEAVY METAL: F.A.K.K.²


KISS: PSYCHO CIRCUS


RUNE

The Gathering of Developers, with titles like MAX PAYNE, HEAVY METAL F.A.K.K.², and KISS: PSYCHO CIRCUS in development, can hardly be called choir boys. Who are these guys, and why do they think they're out to save gaming?

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Ultima Ascension

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SimCity 3000
Our guide to urban planning will keep you on budget and atop the polls



Myth II
Tricks, tips, and detailed battle plans to bring out the most dastardly effects of your favorite wraiths and zombies



Close Combat III: The Russian Front
Stuck on the Volga with nowhere to go? Don't end up like Paulus' Sixth Army—read this article!



CG Tips is on vacation due to our comprehensive 501 Cheats feature. Look for CG Tips to return next month.

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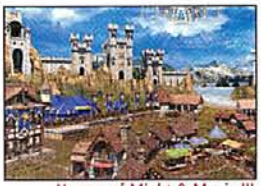
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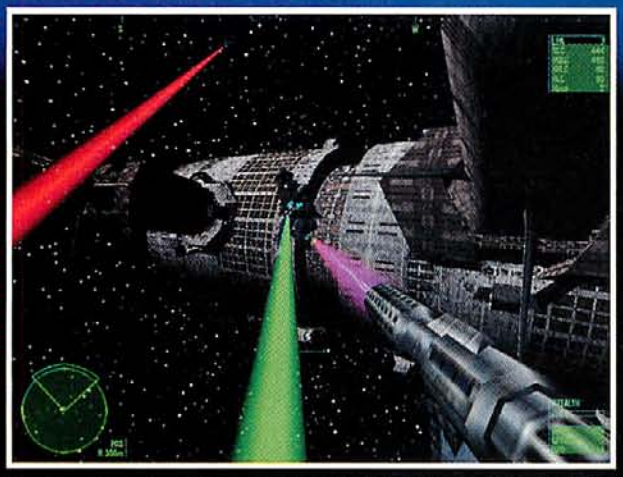
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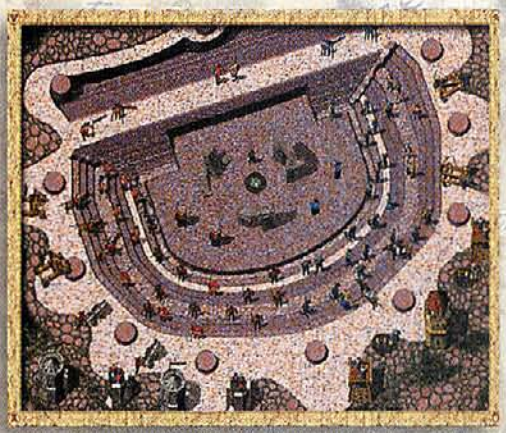
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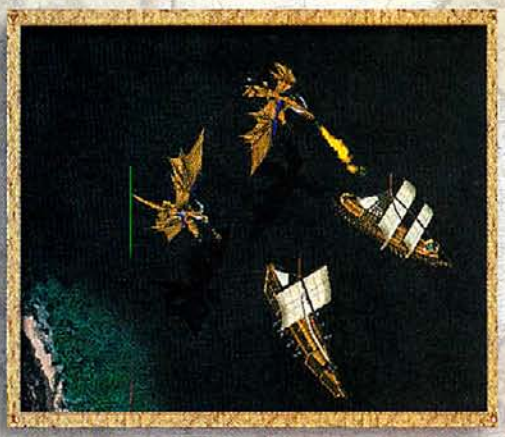
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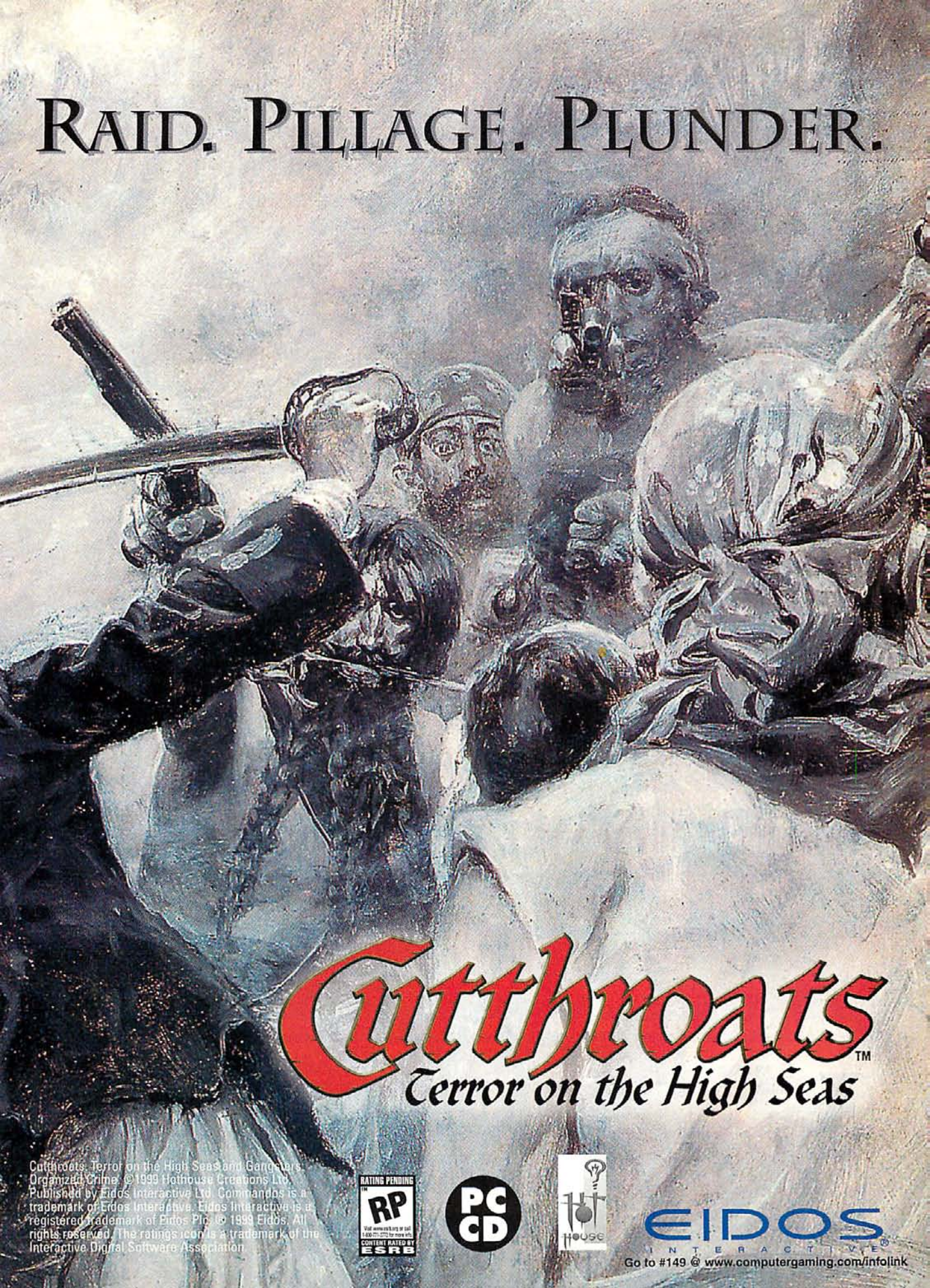
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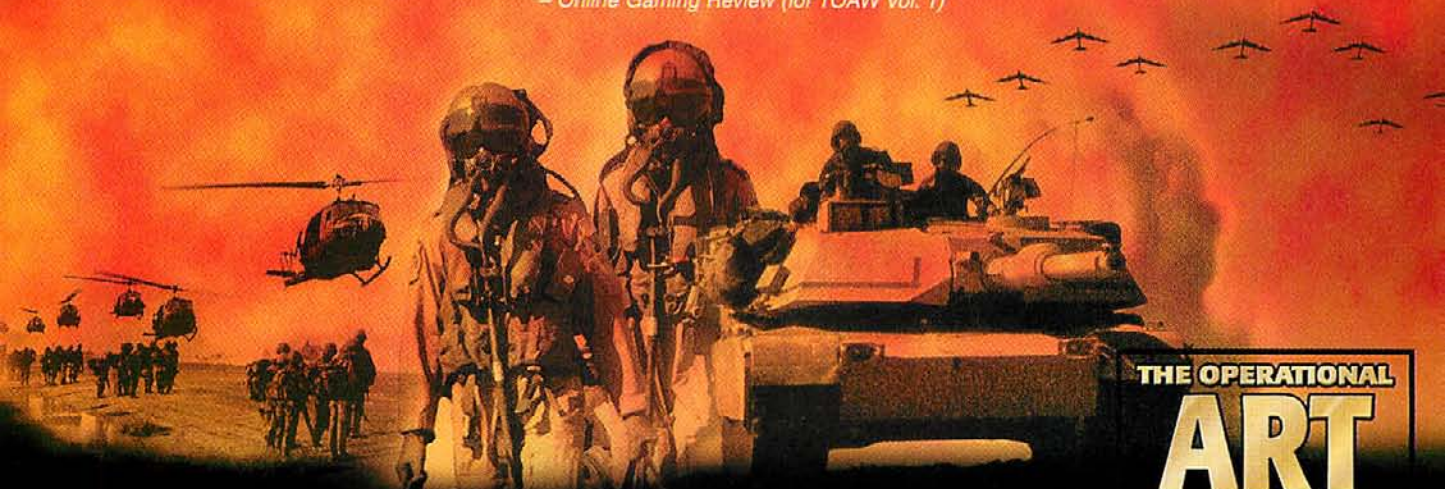


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JOHNNY WILSON

The Real Half-Life

In Memoriam—Allen "Doc" Greenberg



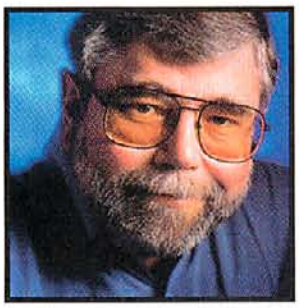
I just threw away my editorial, my pompous words about the future of online gaming and how we stand on the brink of the next wave of multiplayer gaming. It's a good editorial and it needs to be published, but it just doesn't hold up against the story I must write. This is the story of a real deathmatch, the story of a man who died too soon. He was a friend, a colleague, a fellow editor, a father, and a gamer. In chronological years, this *CGW* editor lived only about half of a life's expected duration. In important matters, his mark is longer.

He should have died under mysterious circumstances, like a hero in one of those adventure games he loved to play. He should have left behind a trail of puzzles, like the ones in the classics he continually challenged. He should have died with a wicked smile on his face as he shocked us with his Gilbert Gottfried impression of a cantankerous East Coast nerd. He should have left us peacefully with a gentle smile on his face as he nodded approvingly at the son and daughter of whom he was so proud.

Instead, he died after living large. He died as the kind of mensch he admired in those short stories and novelettes by his favorite author, Harlan Ellison. He was a victim of his own rare blood-type and his inability to recuperate fully after a series of organ transplants. He fought on to the end, hoping to make some sense of the suffering through which he was struggling.

And all the way through the period of savage nights and days of physical weakness, he played games. Even while the medication and physical weakness played games with his head, he kept on writing. He no longer tortured his editor-in-chief with lead paragraphs so bizarre and strange that it was unclear whether we had a genius with a strange sense of humor or a demented schizophrenic on our staff. His contributions started to get smaller and less regular, but he kept playing and he kept writing right up until the end.

This is a story about heroism. Please indulge me. I first came in contact with Allen Greenberg (or "Doc," as he was known to us) after he started writing for *The Electronic Gamer*, one of the original e-zines on CompuServe. I contacted him about writing for *Computer Gaming World*, and he jumped at the chance to review computer games for us. He soon proved his mettle at writing about adventure games and puzzle games. Doc was enthusiastic and always gave us a laugh or two as we edited his material. He wrote for both the print magazine and the first *CGW* online publication, our long-time publication on the Prodigy service. So, when there came a time that we needed an editor for our Prodigy publication, we decided to hire him.



Even then, though, Doc was worried. You see, the guys told him that I always ask prospective employees about the books they have read, their favorite authors, and the magazines that they read regularly. Allen's favorite author happened to be the great author of speculative fiction, Harlan Ellison, and he not only knew that Harlan and I had once colored the atmospheres of our respective offices in blue storm clouds of unrestrained verbiage, but he was also aware that Harlan had taken some potshots at me on the Science Fiction Channel. (Yes, I'm the editor of the so-called *Video Wahoo Magazine* about which Harlan railed in a couple of interviews.) When I asked the question, Doc trembled all over and exhaled quickly. "God help me, it's Harlan Ellison." I laughed the hardest I ever have in a job interview. I happen to admire Harlan, as well. I told Doc that this was grounds for hiring.

> He **died** as the kind of **mensch** he admired in those short stories by Harlan **Ellison.**

Yet, there was a problem. Doc had been diagnosed with diabetes and had left his lucrative dental practice to work in a clinic. His skills had declined because his vision was getting worse and his partners no longer wanted him. He was able to help quite a few people in the clinic, but he knew that he wouldn't last for long. *Computer Gaming World* became his new reason for living. He moved to California and had a great couple of years before the disease began to have an impact on his work.

Even though he was weak, he continued to edit our Prodigy publication until its demise. Doc was our first telecommuting editor during that period, and his work kept him going for a long time. Yet, his life was now a series of dialysis treatments and his trips into the office became more and more difficult. The adventure game puzzles that he once solved with ease came painfully slower and slower to him as he waited for more than two years for the much-needed organ match. In the course of getting to the office, he would often fall on the streets of San Francisco, pick himself up, and keep on going (if no one called for an ambulance—an occurrence that happened more than once). He never gave up. Finally, the transplant took place. Finally, it looked like Allen's nightmare was over.

He returned to us with clear mind and new focus on work. He was still weak, but his writing kept getting better and he was making the comeback for which we'd been praying.

Then, his body rebelled. He experienced a severe relapse. He left us suddenly. No more cynical shouts startling us in the office. No more incredible joy as he solved the latest puzzle. No more dry wit. Doc completed his adventure. He solved the last puzzle.

His cubicle in the office doesn't look like the violence-torn setting for some angry Harlan Ellison story. It doesn't look like the old sanitarium in THE BLACKSTONE CHRONICLES. But it looks pretty creepy without my friend and colleague. I wanted to see him win the transplant game. I wanted to see him get the best ending possible. I hope, for his sake, he did. Allen "Doc" Greenberg died in March of 1999. Shalom, Allen, Shalom. CGW

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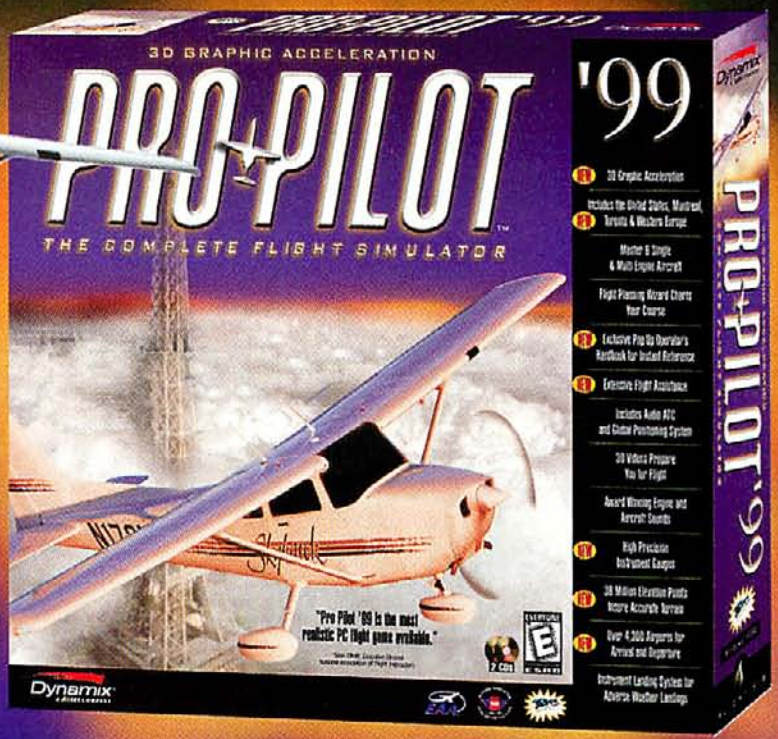
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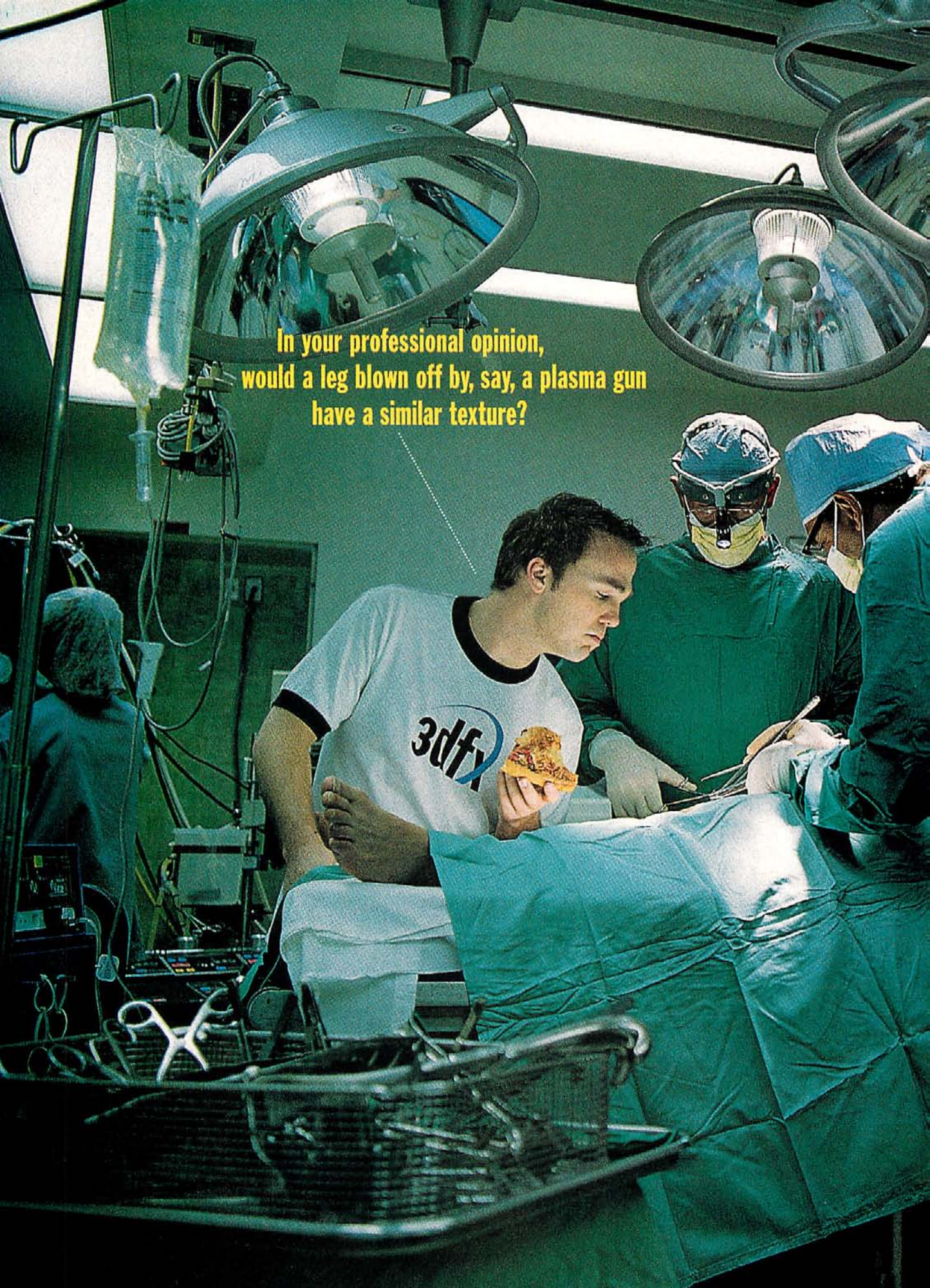
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DENNY ATKIN

~~Get~~ Buy a Life

Spending Big Bucks—Real Ones—for Hot ULTIMA ONLINE Real Estate

An odd phenomenon struck online auction house eBay (**www.ebay.com**) this past March: People began selling virtual castles and imaginary characters. eBay has always had an amazing selection of items, from cheesy collectibles to used Ferraris. It can be an addictive online experience (this editor has spent an embarrassing amount of time and money on eBay filling out the *Green Lantern* comics collection he could never afford as a kid), so it's only appropriate that it would become a venue for trafficking in ULTIMA ONLINE accounts.

It all started when eBay user Turbohawk (in real life, Steve, a 30-year-old firefighter) decided to sell his copy of ULTIMA ONLINE, complete with five characters and over half a million gold pieces. The account ended up selling for a whopping $521. Word got around, and within a week there were over 80 accounts for sale, many with bids over $500. At press time, one account had sold for $2,050, while another had reached $3,000 after 57 bids—and with six days to go until auction close!

The questions are obvious: Why would someone sell an account they'd spent thousands of hours developing? More important, what is it about this gaming experience that could cause dozens of players to drop hundreds—or even thousands—of dollars on a powerful account? To find out, I interviewed a number of UO veterans who were selling their accounts as well as wannabe castle lords who had bid $250 or more for these accounts.

Unreal Estate

For many, the appeal of buying UO accounts is one of solving a problem that Californians will empathize with: lack of real estate. Shadow (in real life Richard, a 39-year-old controls design engineer) explains: "What it does for you is allow you access to items that might take you a very long time to acquire on your own much sooner than it normally would. Real estate in UO is pretty much set now. There are very few places that you can actually place a small house, let alone something huge. Therefore the only way to obtain such a place is to buy it in a game, through various Web sites or through eBay."



Others are looking for characters. They find it tedious to perform the activities necessary to build strong enough characters and they see buying an account as a way around this. When asked whether taking over another person's character spoils the role-playing aspect of UO, Scott, 28, a systems administrator, explains, "I have my own character that I developed and spend most of my time playing. I was looking for support characters for that character. UO doesn't allow for good role playing because you have to spend way too much time doing mundane things to gain the wealth required for you to do any kind of adventuring."

Believe it or not, even romance can be a factor. "Well, my fiancé will be traveling a lot soon, and we thought it would be neat if he could play with me while he was away. I decided to first bid on one as a birthday present for him," says Jocelyn, 20, a college student in Dallas. In addition, buying an already powerful character for him means she'll be able to more safely build her own character's abilities.

Selling Out

So why sell an account? Reasons vary. Not enough time to play, frustration with game lag, and moving on to other games are some of the typical rationales. Harlan, a 22-year old college student, sold his and his fiancée's accounts so they could move on to EVERQUEST. "My fiancée and I are selling our accounts as a group deal," Harlan says, adding, "We have kept our long-distance relationship alive via role playing on UO."

> It's only **appropriate** that **eBay** would become a **venue** for trafficking in **ULTIMA ONLINE** accounts.

While many account buyers have been primarily interested in property, Harlan and his fiancée hope to see their characters live on. "So far the emphasis has been on how much gold and what equipment are available," Harlan reports. "Our sale is more about the mood we have created with our house and characters. Yes, our characters are good, but more than that, they have a history and a legacy. They are known in their shard as lovers and travelers. We are selling the characters' reputations as well as their statistics."

Sometimes, selling the account is a way to gain both money and time to spend in real life. Brian, 21, a student and part-time Best Buy computer technician, had put about 2,000 hours into ULTIMA ONLINE between August and March. "Many days I would put in 15-plus hours just killing stuff, making stuff, etcetera. I found myself many times up to 6 a.m. or all night and not even knowing it."

Brian saw the eBay trend starting and decided it would be a perfect opportunity for a self-intervention. "Since my time playing UO I have seen my grades go from As to Cs, to the point where I did not want to do anything but play UO. I found myself laying in bed at night thinking about what I could be doing on UO right now. This continued during school, work, driving, everything. Even dates I would cut short to get home to play UO. I got a cable modem just for UO. I saw this getting out of hand, so I had to cut my addiction off. I have since then started playing more quick games like STARSEIGE: TRIBES and others."

UO publisher Origin is cool about this whole trend; in fact, the company is planning to modify its user agreement to make such sales "legal" in the game license.

"We know items are sold and traded, but we did not think characters would hold such a high monetary value," says Origin's David Swofford. "The in-game economy in ULTIMA ONLINE has always been healthy and dynamic. It's only natural that eventually it would be mirrored in the real world like this."

With thousands of dollars changing hands weekly on eBay for virtual castles and characters, it's not hard to picture a near future in which companies join in and sell the games cheap but offer weapons, potions, and keeps as extra-cost options. CGW



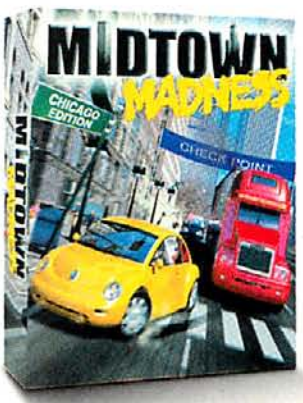
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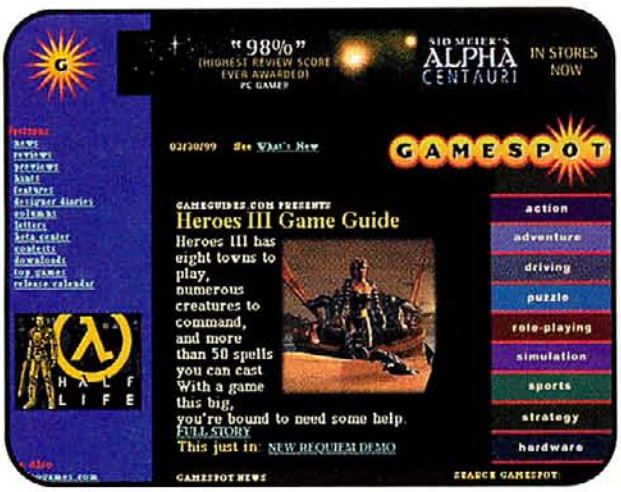
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If it's behind-the scenes stories of game development that you want, visit the features section on *GameSpot*.

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The movie is probably already on video, but you can hear how Chris Roberts justified this "experiment" and read a retrospective of the entire WING COMMANDER series.

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We get the inside story on the rise, fall, and rise again of Maxis Software. Found out how an idea about city planning became one of the best-selling games of all time. Then, learn what Maxis has planned for the future.

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If you want to find out what games are coming out when, check out our release calendar. Not only does it list more than 200 games and their respective ship dates, but also includes game description and links to all demos, previews, and news on those games. We update it several times a month, so you always get the most current information.

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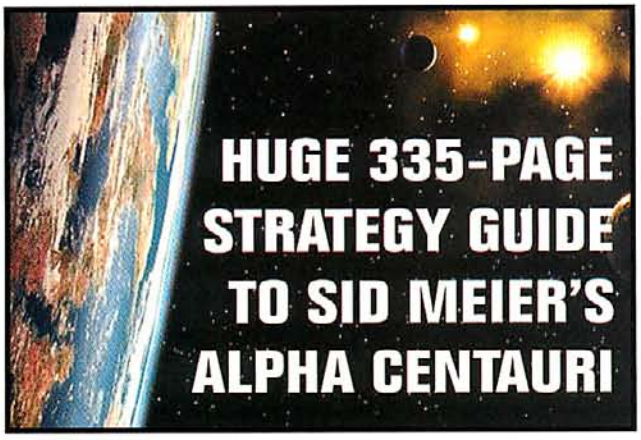
Play Heroes III and Eight Other Hot Demos!

HEROES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC III

PRODUCT/GENRE	EXECUTABLE	DESCRIPTION
Turn based fantasy adventure	\heroesiii\setup.exe	Play 29 turns in one sample level.



In this demo, you get to play 29 turns of the latest game in the MIGHT AND MAGIC series. Gameplay centers around exploring with your heroes, recruiting new forces, managing resources, building up towns, doing battle with other heroes, and expanding your territory. Improvements from HEROES II include enhanced graphics, tons of new units, upgrades for all units, and lots of new spells and heroes. In the demo level, you are placed in a world with a good selection of towns, resources, wandering monsters, treasure, and enemy heroes to familiarize yourself with the game system.



Video Clips

- Planescape Torment
- Darkstone
- Max Payne
- Giants

Toolbox

- Myth II Tactics
- Alpha Centauri Strategy Guide

Additional June CD Titles

MACHINES

PRODUCT/GENRE: First/third-person action game
EXECUTABLE: \machines\setup.exe
Play three single-player missions and one multiplayer mission of futuristic warfare.



HIGH HEAT

PRODUCT/GENRE: Baseball
EXECUTABLE: \Hh2k_demo\setup.exe
Play three innings with either New York or San Diego.



DEER HUNTER 2

PRODUCT/GENRE: Hunting Game
EXECUTABLE: \dhunter2\deerhunter2demo.exe
Easy sample hunting ground to find yourself some venison.



ROLLCAGE

PRODUCT/GENRE: Arcade racer
EXECUTABLE: \rollcage\setup.exe
Drive two cars on one track in this wild and crazy racing game.



THE AXE

PRODUCT/GENRE: Interactive music game
EXECUTABLE: \demos\axe\install.exe
Claymation characters take solos with three different instruments.



SEVEN KINGDOMS III

PRODUCT/GENRE: Real time strategy game
EXECUTABLE: \sevenkingdoms\Www.exe
Non-interactive multimedia presentation describing Seven Kingdoms III including a video trailer



VITRUAL DEEP SEA FISHING

PRODUCT/GENRE: Deep sea fishing sim.
EXECUTABLE: \vds_fishing\install.exe
The demo has a fishing trip off the coast in San Diego with a 10 minute playing limit.



REQUIEM

PRODUCT/GENRE: First-person 3D action shooter.
EXECUTABLE: \requiem\reqdemo.exe
Battle one boss and her demon spawn in this one chamber sneak peak.



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LETTERS

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VAMPIRE BITES BACK

I loved the cover on the April issue. I just opened up my May issue to find people bitching to all hell about it. Get a life people! It's a freakin' picture of a vampire! Sorry if some of us don't get off looking at pictures of chairs and rolling nice green lawns on our magazines. Go read *Better Homes and Gardens* or some crap if you don't like *CGW*. And *CGW*, keep putting out more and more awesome covers!

Alaric

We'd like to thank all those who wrote in support of the April cover. When the issue came out, most of the feedback was negative, so most of the May issue letters reflected that. Since then huzzahs have outnumbered hurrumps about 3 to 1. It has been the most controversial cover ever, and we thought we'd print a few more opinions here before closing on the issue.

I just read the Letters section in May's issue. Screw all the prudes, wussies, and whiners that didn't appreciate the fine example of a female vampire that graced April's cover! Keep up the good work, *CGW*.

From a 33-year-old male who gets a mahogany whenever Cleopatra's emissary visits him in Civ II.

Grant Berdan

What was all the fuss about? You see a lot worse on TV, at the movies, at the mall, at the beach, etc. You would have to stay in a room with no TV, never go out, or blindfold yourself not to see this kind of thing.

Anyway, keep doing what you do best and that's put out a great magazine. You don't have to worry about me ever canceling my subscription, unless you start covering country music or give sewing tips.

Doug Anderson

So much for the Garth Brooks Cross-Stitch Strategy Tips Special.

I thought that the Vampire cover was inappropriate. The cover should be representative of what the other 200 or so pages of the magazine contain. The people who are looking for video game content are now saddled with a magazine that, while the content is appropriate for many age groups, and environments, the cover is not. You do not do your readers a service by putting them in this situation.

Ryan Spanton

The April cover model, Angel Carter, had a great makeup job. However, shouldn't the fang marks have been vertical, not horizontal? I don't think it's possible for someone to get bitten on the neck at the angle portrayed on the cover.

Gary Bremer, Jr.
U.S. Navy

We've learned that to shoot a vampire you must: get the model for at least 3 hours, watch where the makeup artist puts the bite marks, and make sure her bustier fits.

I fit your target demographics (34, white, professional male), and I am sick of seeing women used as marketing devices. If *CGW* wants to use sex to sell, that is your right and the consumers will then vote with their dollars (you might be on the winning end). But don't take your argument for doing such to some false intellectual plane. It is pure "boobs, sex, violence = sales (money), and we want ours" marketing plain and simple.

Scott Morgan

I'm appalled at the rash of letters concerning your April cover. What's the big deal? Anytime I want to see worse than that, all I have to do is watch an episode of *Melrose Place*. Clearly we as a nation either have way too much time on our hands, or are just too friggin' repressed. Perhaps it's a combination of both.

Mike Bean

I think your April cover was very spontaneous and completely appropriate

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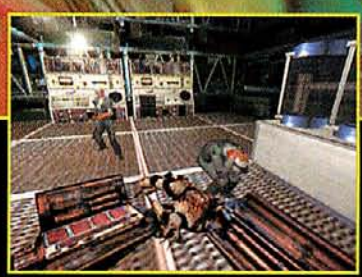
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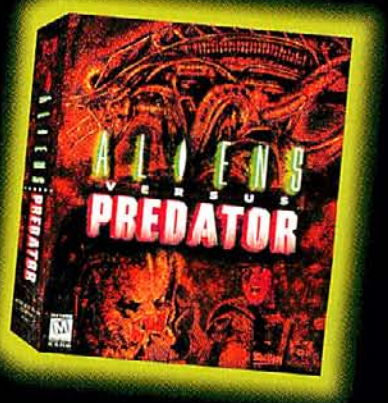


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for your readers. Please don't let a few angry parents intimidate you or your staff and stop you from doing what you think is best. Parents are not the only ones reading your magazine, and younger readers such as myself should be heard also. I hope you won't be intimidated or pressured into changing the way you select your covers.

Zorik Ishayev

I can understand how some people would get upset when they saw the April cover, but I saw something in the May issue that put it into perspective: an ad on page 135 for the ATI Rage Fury shows two eyes in a bag. Now if I was a parent, that would send a chill up my spine and make me wonder about the current state of humanity, not some beautiful woman dressed as a vampire.

To all of those who wrote to complain about the April issue: It was one issue out of 12 this year. It's gone now. Get on with your lives.

Jason Allen

The April *CGW* cover was disturbing. The makeup and the blood on the model was unsettling. I didn't like it, my kids (including a teenager) didn't like it, and my wife hated it. I ended up tearing the cover off the issue and tossing it. That was a first—for any magazine in the house.

Mike Cazaubon

I cannot believe the outrage over your April cover. Every one of those letters referred to the size of that woman's breasts. What the heck does that have to do with anything? It sounds like they are saying, "I don't mind my child swearing or being exposed to simulated killing in PC games, but PLEASE, OH, PLEASE don't let them see part of a woman's breast, especially if they are big."

What a bunch of hypocrites! You're all doing a fine job; please keep it up!

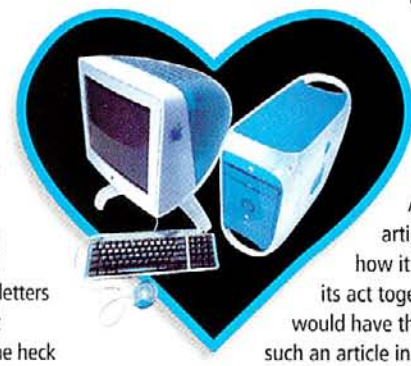
Randy Millard

MAC MAKES A COMEBACK

I am writing in response to Johnny Wilson's Editorial in the April issue ("Ole Mac Is Back"). I'm glad that someone in the PC world has something nice to say about the Mac. Last April I converted to the Macintosh after using a PC for more than 10 years. I have to say it is by far the best computer I have ever used. The only problem is that good games are sometimes hard to find. I solved that problem by sticking OrangeMicros' high end PC card in my Mac, so basically I have two computers in one box. Helps save desk space. It works great and plays all the latest games great. As for the iMac, this is not a gaming computer. To get a good gaming computer you have to get one of the desktop or mini-tower G3 models. I have been a subscriber to your magazine for a long time, and I will continue to do so, as you always have great coverage of upcoming games, whether PC or Mac.

Kevin Kelly

I am an avid reader of *CGW* and a Mac user. Obviously I don't read *CGW* for the in-depth Macintosh product reviews or all the snide remarks that sneak in where ever possible (though I do find them amusing). I read *CGW* because where else is a Mac guy going to get the dope on all the great new titles that might someday make it to his computer?



I just purchased my April edition, flipped through the first few pages and there it was! An almost fair article on Apple and how it is finally getting its act together! Who would have thought I'd see such an article in the "PC or die" game mag of them all. The article was very fair, though it's obvious that you still don't get it, but it is a start. Then to top it all off you went and listed the Mac system requirements for MYTH II! Keep it up and you might end up with a few thousand new subscribers.

Matt Mabry

The Mac is indeed a viable gaming platform again. The iMacs are hot sellers, and the new G3s are solid gaming systems (see our review on page 132). The only problem remains a lack of titles. Apple insists (as they have for years) that this time they're really going after the gaming market. We hope they put their money where their mouth is and help developers convert more new games to the Mac.







All aboard in war-torn Europe! In WWII, the great responsibility of securing supplies and transporting troops for the Allies is yours. The war years rely on the services of the iron steed. Be a patriot and do your part!

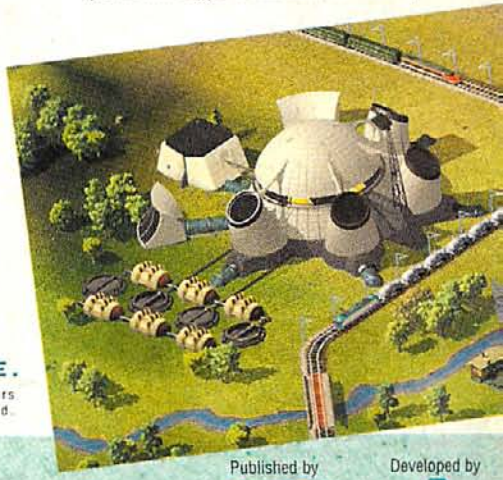
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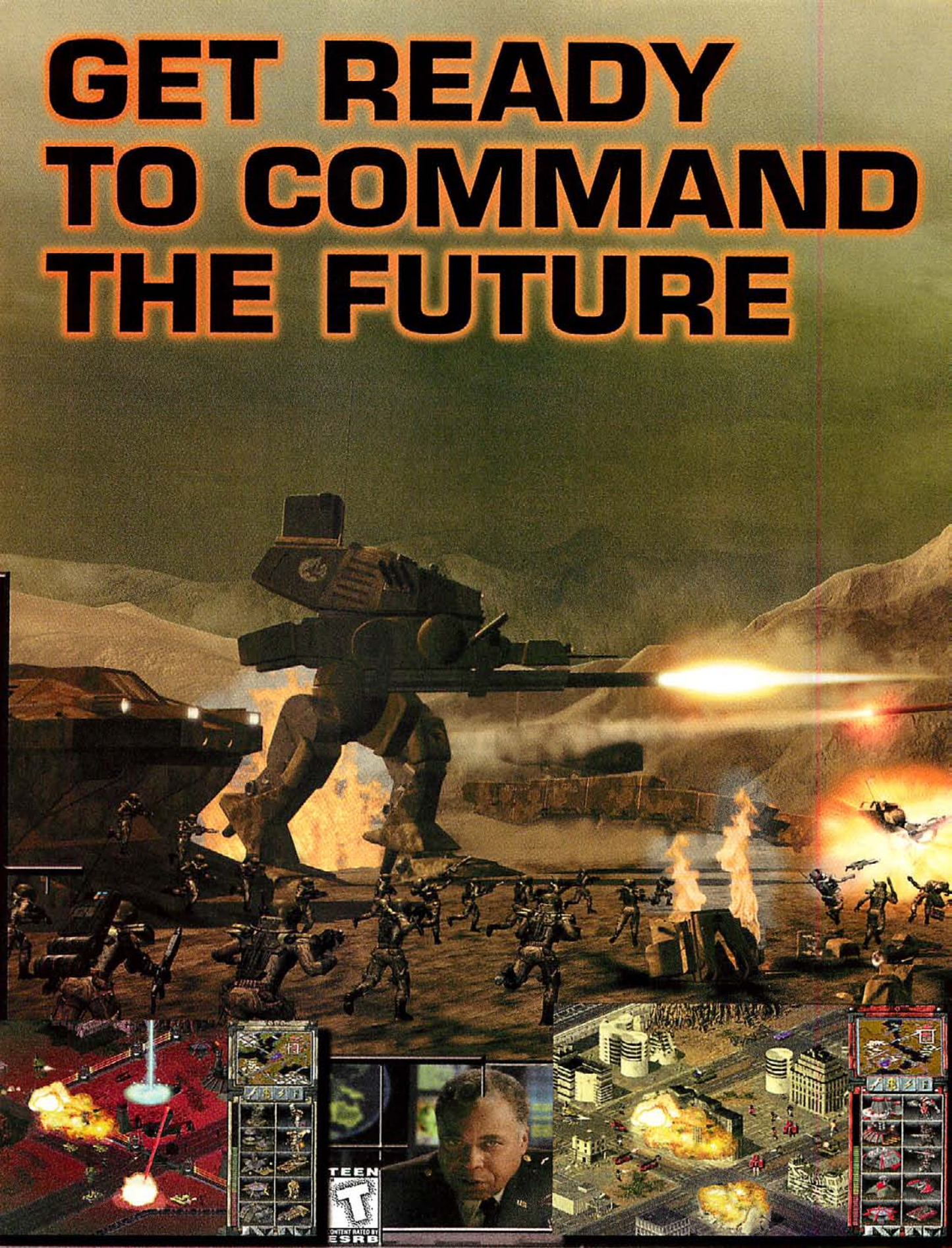
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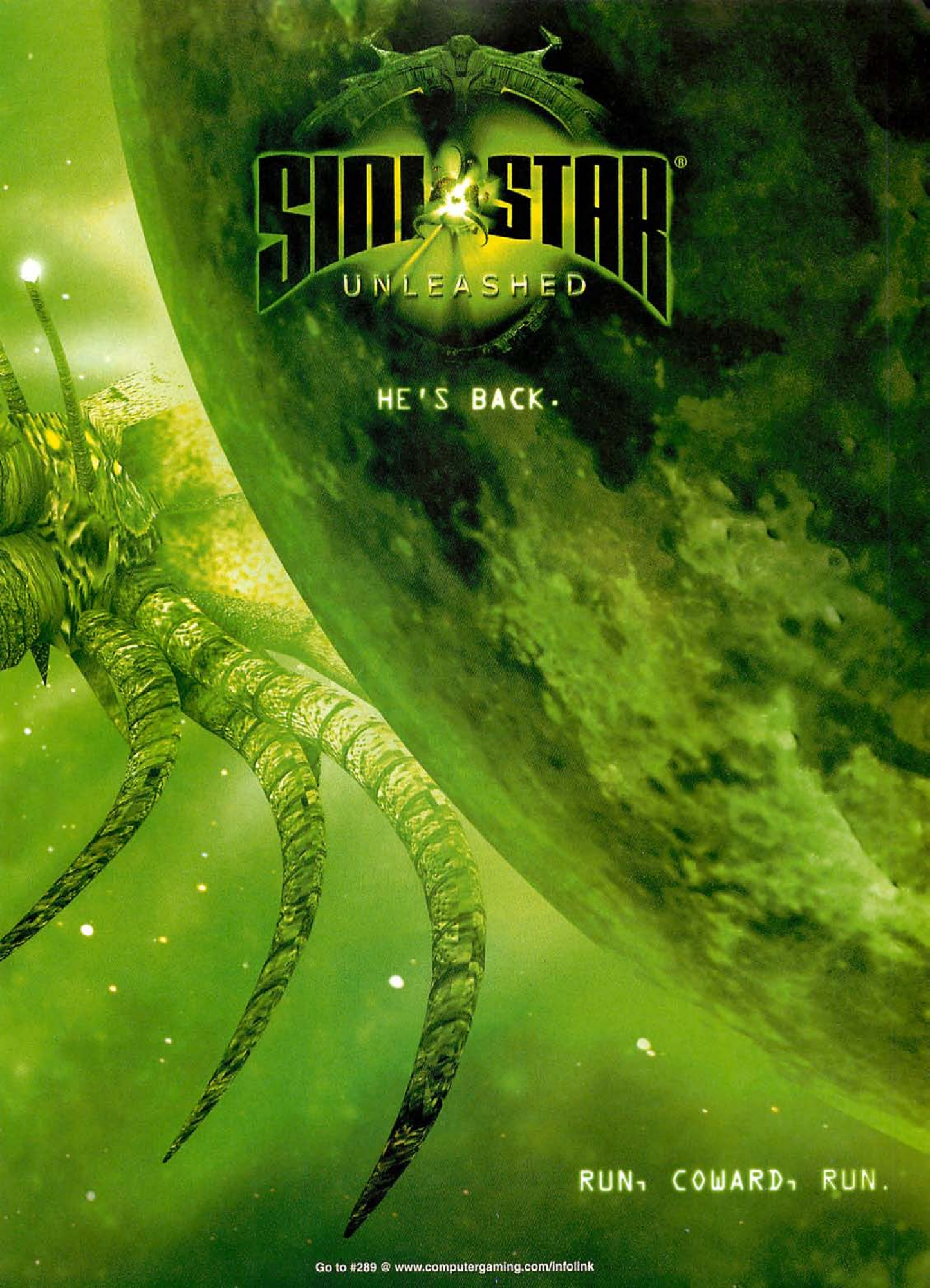
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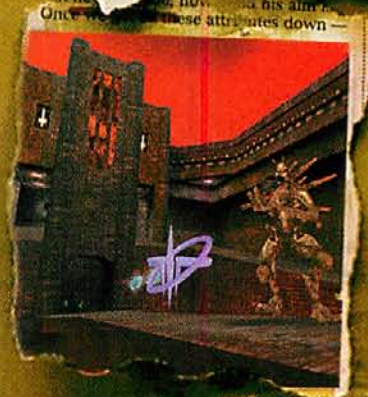
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THE BEST KILLS ARE NOT ALWAYS ONLINE

The excitement of the Deathmatch is no longer the exclusive realm of the online gamer. Thanks to QIIIA's revolutionary artificial intelligence, the days of predictable bots are just a memory. The game's characters react like experienced gamers, and when you get gibbed, you may swear your computer is enjoying itself. Single players will find that level by level, QIIIA delivers the intensity of a live Deathmatch. Fragging your enemy is every bit as exciting, getting fragged is every bit as humiliating. You may just think twice about turning your back on your computer.







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PAUL DOUGLAS
Confounding Factor
- Last game - Tomb Raider
- Next project - Galleon

TOBY GARD
Confounding Factor
- Last game - Tomb Raider
- Next project - Galleon

GREG ZESCHUK
BioWare Corp
- Hit Title - Baldur's Gate
- Next project - MDK 2

FEARGUS URQUHART
Black Isle Studios
- Latest release - Fallout 2
- Next role - Planescape Torment

DAVID PERRY
Shiny Entertainment, Inc.
- Big Hit - Earthworm Jim
- Upcoming release - Messiah

RAY MUZYKA
BioWare Corp
- Hit Title - Baldur's Gate
- Next project - MDK 2

ALAN PAVLISH
Tantrum
- Legacy - Wasteland
- Next Tantrum release - Descent 3

RUSTY BUCHERT
Tantrum
- Last voyage - Star Trek: Starfleet Academy
- Next game - It's Top-Secret. :)

BRIAN CHRISTIAN
14° East
Coming Soon:
- Star Trek - Starfleet Command
- Star Trek - Klingon Academy
- Star Trek - New Worlds

SHOT ON LOCATION AT INTERPLAY WORLDWIDE HEADQUARTERS



DREW MARKHAM
Xatrix Entertainment
- Last game - Redneck Rampage
- Upcoming - Kingpin: Life of Crime

STEVE CHAPLIN
Celeris, Inc.
- Latest release - Virtual Pool 2
- Next title is on a need to know basis

NICK BRUTY
Planet Moon Studios
- Latest game - MDK
- Next project - Giants: Citizen Kabuto

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CGW Does E³

Your Fearless Editors Roll Up, Tune In, and Turn On for the Biggest Gaming Event of the Year

By the time you read this, the *CGW* editors will have dogpiled into the company 1972 VW van and gone on their way to Los Angeles for the annual headache-inducing gaming extravaganza known as the Electronic Entertainment Expo. Yes, like taxes, or a bad rash, E3 is upon us once again, and it's our job be there and soak it in. Hype, parties, booth bimbos, and the occasional computer game are what E3 is all about, and we'll do our best to cover it all for you. Check **www.gamespot.com** for up-to-the-minute coverage, and be sure to read our upcoming, humongoid, post-E3 Fall Preview issue later this summer, once we're back at the office and sober again.

In the meantime, here are 10 of the games we're most anxious to see at this year's expo:

Black and White



BLACK AND WHITE

Is it a game or an elaborate Rorschach test? About all that's clear about the flagship title from Peter Molyneux's Lionhead Studios is its sweeping ambition. Incorporating elements from Molyneux's groundbreaking POPULOUS games, this god game could shatter the real-time strategy mold by responding uniquely to every gamer's style of play. The game's magic system will encompass pure good, pure evil, and everything in between, allowing players to play as they wish. The hook here is that the physical world and everyone and everything will reflect the tenor of your play, with the earth charring and splitting under evil rule or thriving under benevolent guidance. BLACK AND WHITE has the potential to be truly revolutionary.



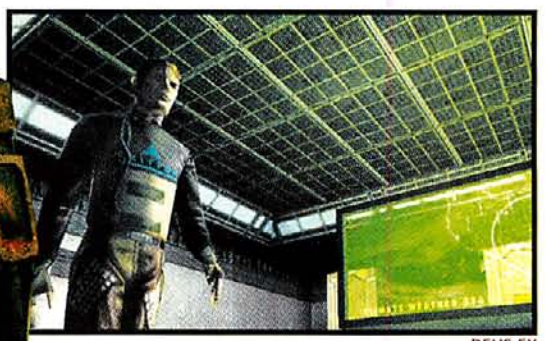
COMMAND & CONQUER 2: TIBERIAN SUN

Command & Conquer 2: Tiberian Sun

We want to see TIBERIAN SUN simply because we're champing at the bit to play it. While we were hoping the game would ship in time for last Christmas, we're encouraged by the designers' taking the time to balance and tweak it properly. We'll wipe the anticipatory drool off our chins long enough to check the progress of the dynamic, problem-solving AI, the new units, and other game revisions before relaying the information to you, our beloved readers, in a future issue.

Deus Ex

Of the initial Ion Storm lineup, the one title we anticipate the most is also the one that is getting the least hype. The fact that it's an action-RPG using the UNREAL engine is already intriguing, but the setting and involvement of designing legend Warren Spector (SYSTEM SHOCK, ULTIMA UNDERWORLD) is



DEUS EX

what makes this title stand out. No fairies or magic pixie wands here: Instead, you get spies, conspiracies, and locales like the White House and the streets of Shanghai. Think James Bond meets *The X-Files*—with the UNREAL engine and the creative energy of an industry veteran—and you can see why we can't wait to declassify this game at E3.

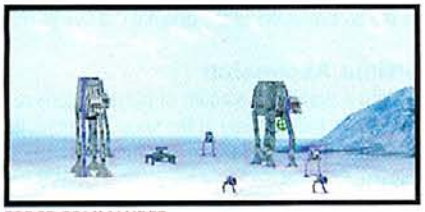
Diablo II

Merely the sequel to one of the best games of the last decade. Blizzard's been working on this title for so long now, and we've been anticipating it for so long, that it's easy to forget to be excited about it. But make no mistake, this display is going to be one of the most crowded, popular ones at E3, and we'll be there too. Remember how much better WARCRAFT II was than WARCRAFT? And remember how awesome the original DIABLO already was? Don't start underestimating Blizzard now.

Flight Combat: Thunder Over Europe

Finally, Looking Glass has taken its talents for developing realistic looking and flying flight sims and added a much-requested feature: guns. Taking off at E3, FLIGHT COMBAT will have you flying over European terrain with the quality of the company's FLIGHT UNLIMITED titles. But those who aren't interested in practicing for a real pilot's license will find a highly detailed damage model, realistic flight physics, and AI pilots of varying bravery levels more engaging than pretty scenery. A flight recorder will let you savor your kills, and there's even apparently a chance there will be a flyable Me-163 rocket plane.

Force Commander



FORCE COMMANDER

In an effort to make sure George Lucas can still afford to buy groceries after the release of the *Star Wars Episode I* this summer, LucasArts will be showcasing this real-time strategy title. Shown at last year's E3, FORCE COMMANDER has been MIA for a year and has been the subject of more rumors than Area 51—is it set in the classic *Star Wars* universe or the prequel? Why is it taking so long? We debunked some rumors in our special *Episode I* preview last month, but we hope to bring you more info when LucasArts lifts the Cone of Silence in L.A.

Indiana Jones and the Infernal Machine

Harrison Ford may be getting too old to make another Indy movie, but at least gamers will get the chance to play his digital avatar in this third-person action/adventure title. Set

CGW's Reality Check

Van Halen's David Lee Roth once said that the reason that all rock critics loved Elvis Costello was because they looked like him. This same theory explains why all the gaming critics love HALF-LIFE: We all look like Gordon Freeman. In any event, here's the latest roundup of 10 recent games and their corresponding review scores in the major gaming mags and Web sites. All scores use each pub's own scoring system.

	CGW (OUT OF FIVE)	PC GAMER (OUT OF 100%)	PC GAMES (A–F)	CG STRATEGY PLUS (OUT OF FIVE)	PC ACCELERATOR (OUT OF 10)	GAMESPOT (OUT OF 10)	GAMECENTER (OUT OF FIVE)
Baldur's Gate	4 stars	94%	A-	5 stars	8	9.2	5 stars
Carmageddon 2	3 stars	83%	C+	4.5 stars	7	7.8	4 stars
Close Combat III	3.5 stars	92%	A	3.5 stars	8	9.2	3 stars
Gangsters	2.5 stars	82%	C	2.5 stars	6	5.5	4 stars
Myth II	4.5 stars	*	A	4 stars	7	9.3	4 stars
SM's Alpha Cent.	5 stars	98%	A	4 stars	8	9.1	5 stars
SimCity 3000	4 stars	*	B-	*	8	8.4	4 stars
SC: Brood War	5 stars	*	*	4 stars	8	9.1	4 stars
Starsiege: Tribes	4 stars	92%	B+	4 stars	9	8.6	4 stars
Thief	4.5 stars	90%	*	4.5 stars	9	9.1	5 stars

*no rating available at press time. ■ red indicates editor's choice games

5, 10, and 15 Years Ago in CGW

What We Were Writing About While You Were in Diapers

15 Years Ago: June 1984



By far the silliest thing in this issue, the ad for the "Grand Stand" is a shining example of '80s gamer's kitsch. A tall, curving, freestanding post to hold your joystick in front of your chair, the device removed any question of whether game controllers are phallic symbols. It might hold your stick steady, but it's doubtful that any dork with one sitting in the living room would have any chance at scoring.

10 Years Ago: June 1989



In June 1989, the esteemed Dave Arneson, codesigner of *Dungeons and Dragons*, wrote a great review of HIDDEN AGENDA, a "Banana Republic" simulator. The gamer is "El Presidente" of a small developing nation trying to steer a course through various political minefields. An entire game could be played in under two hours, while providing deep levels of simulation. This game is still fun 10 years later and stands as a great example of how gameplay is more important than flashy graphics.

5 Years Ago: June 1994



1994 was unquestionably the year of DOOM. Significant advances in technology made it an addictive single-player experience. It was however, the multiplayer component that brought workflow to a standstill in offices across America (especially ours). Five years later, John Romero, the most famous of the id team, is still winning awards for his efforts: Most recently, Ion Storm's DOMINION got runner-up for our Coaster of the Year award.

The cheap shots never stop, folks.

Web Sites of the Month

The big Web event for the *CGW* goons this month was the release of the *Star Wars Episode I* trailer. Editorial Assistant Tom Price downloaded it, and the rest of us watched it over and over, until the boss yelled at us to get back to our desks and play TRIBES.

Here's what else we liked on the Web this month.

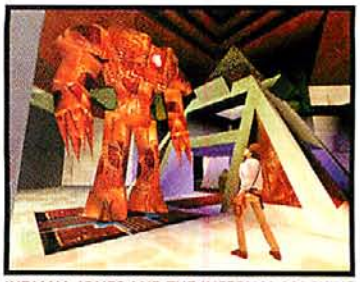
[*Web Sites of the Month, continued on page 49.*]

PIPELINE

Send notices to: cgwpipeline@zd.com

A-10 Warthog Jane's/EA	Q3 '99
Age of Empires II Ensemble/Microsoft	Q3 '99
Anachronox Eidos	Q3 '99
Babylon 5 Space Combat Sierra F/X	Q4 '99
Battlezone 2 Activision	Q3 '99
Beneath Activision	Q3 '99
Civil War Generals 3 Impressions/Sierra	Q3 '99
Conquest: Front. Wars Digital Anvil/Microsoft	Q3 '99
Daikatana Ion Storm/Eidos	Q3 '99
Dark Reign 2 Activision	Q3 '99
Daryl F. Gates' Police Quest: SWAT 2 Sierra	Q3 '99
Destroyer Command SSI	Q3 '99
Diablo II Blizzard	Q3 '99
Diplomacy Avalon Hill/Hasbro Interactive	Q3 '99
Drakan Psygnosis	Q2 '99
Field & Stream Trophy Bass 3D Sierra Sports	Q2 '99
Fighting Steel SSI	Q2 '99
Flanker 2.0 SSI	Q2 '99
Flight Unlimited III EA	Q2 '99
FLY! G.O.D.	Q3 '99
Gabriel Knight 3 Sierra Studios	Q2 '99
Giants Interplay	Q3 '99
Heavy Metal: F.A.K.K. 2 G.O.D.	Q4 '99
Hidden and Dangerous TalonSoft/Take 2	Q3 '99
High Heat Baseball 2000 3DO	Q2 '99
Homeworld Sierra Studios	Q2 '99
Indiana Jones/Infernal Machine LucasArts	Q3 '99
Interstate '82 Activision	Q3 '99
Jane's F/A-18 Jane's /EA	Q4 '99
Kingpin Interplay	Q3 '99
Loose Cannon Microsoft	Q4 '99
Madden 2000 EA Sports	Q3 '99
Maximum Overkill Novalogic	Q3 '99
Max Payne G.O.D.	Q3 '99
MechWarrior III MicroProse	Q2 '99
Messiah Shiny/Interplay	Q3 '99
Metal Fatigue Psygnosis	Q3 '99
MIG Alley Empire	Q3 '99
NASCAR Racing III Sierra Sports	Q3 '99
Nocturne G.O.D.	Q4 '99
Omikron Eidos	Q3 '99
Outcast Infogrames	Q3 '99
Panzer General 3D SSI	Q3 '99
Planescape: Torment Interplay	Q3 '99
Point of Attack HPS Simulations	Q2 '99
Quake III Arena id Software	Q3 '99
Requiem 3DO	Q1 '99
Revenant Eidos	Q2 '99
Re*Volt Acclaim	Q3 '99
Septerra Core Monolith	Q3 '99
Settlers III: Quest Of The Amazons Blue Byte	Q3 '99
Seven Kingdoms II Interactive Magic	Q3 '99
Shadow Company Interactive Magic	Q2 '99
Shadowpact Blue Byte	Q4 '99
Shogun: Total War EA	Q2 '99
Slave Zero Accolade	Q2 '99
Soldier of Fortune Raven/Activision	Q3 '99
Starlancer Digital Anvil/Microsoft	Q4 '99
Star Trek: Klingon Academy Interplay	Q3 '99
Star Trek: New Worlds Interplay	Q3 '99
Star Trek: Sflt Com. Quicksilver/Interplay	Q3 '99
Star Wars Ep. I: The Phantom Men. LucasArts	Q2 '99
Swords & Sorcery Westwood	Q3 '99
System Shock 2 Looking Glass/EA	Q2 '99
Tachyon Novalogic	Q4 '99
Tanktics Interplay	Q2 '99
Team Fortress II Valve/Sierra	Q4 '99
Total Annihilation: Kingdoms Cavedog	Q3 '99
Ultima Ascension Origin/EA	Q4 '99
Vampire: The Masquerade Activision	Q4 '99
WarCraft II Platinum Blizzard	Q2 '99
Warhammer 40k: Rites of War Dreamforge/SSI	Q3 '99
Warlords Prophecy SSG/SSI/Red Orb	Q3 '99
Werewolf ASC Games	Q4 '99
Wild, Wild West SouthPeak	Q4 '99
Wings of Destiny Psygnosis	Q3 '99

after World War II, INDIANA JONES AND THE INFERNAL MACHINE will stay true to the spirit of the movies as Indy races against time and around the globe to thwart a group of nasty Russians out to rebuild an ancient device capable of generating incredible evil.



INDIANA JONES AND THE INFERNAL MACHINE

Jane's USAF

From the creators of ISRAELI AIR FORCE, USAF will feature a new terrain engine and campaigns ranging from historical Vietnam missions in an F-105 Thud to future scenarios in the F-15C and F-22. It will also introduce Jane's new World War multisim multiplayer support. We're anxious to get some hands-on time in this sim, and we're also hoping to hear more news about the F/A-18 sim under development by Jane's Baltimore team.

Panzer General 3D

PANZER GENERAL's record as the best-selling computer wargame is in jeopardy, now that AXIS & ALLIES has sold more than 350,000 copies. So, the retail wars should only escalate when SSI ships PANZER GENERAL 3D this fall—especially since it's one of the few turn-based games to actually utilize Direct 3D. Aside from the typically tough SSI computer opponent, PANZER 3D should be more playable over the Internet than its storied predecessors, if only because SSI Online should actually function more like Battle.net than a standard Web site. Wargaming could really use a spark, and PANZER GENERAL 3D should cause as big an explosion as the original did five years ago.

Ultima Ascension

With a significant amount of playable code ready, Origin should be rolling out ULTIMA ASCENSION in a big way at the show. We hope this will help answer the big question: Can this much-discussed RPG successfully make the shift to 3D? We think so (see page 60 in this issue for our exclusive sneak peek), but the masses have yet to speak.

The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly

THE GOOD

• **TEAM PLAY** After spending years killing each other randomly (and repeatedly), *CGW* has jumped on the team-play bandwagon in a big way, thanks to the awesome TRIBES and TEAM FORTRESS CLASSIC. It's been an uphill battle to learn how to work together; thank goodness we still get to kill the other guys. Welcome to *real* role-playing.



• **STAR WARS EPISODE I RELEASE** May 19, baby. Don't even bother calling us that day. We won't be here. A new *Star Wars* movie?! What a way to end the millennium!

THE BAD

• **GDC BLOAT** The Games Developers Conference is turning into a victim of its own success, with lots of hype and bluster, but not a whole lot of content. Hey—that's what E3 is for. And what was up with those semirancid boxed lunches?



• **NO STAR WARS EPISODE I PRE-SALES** Great. Right when we get all excited about the movie, 20th Century Fox announces that there won't be advanced ticket sales. Don't bother calling us the entire week before opening day.

THE UGLY

• **WING COMMANDER MOVIE** Yikes. Okay, so we weren't expecting CITIZEN KANE or STAR WARS EPISODE I anyway, but this steaming pile isn't even rental-worthy. Memo to game designers: Stick to computer games.



Console Wars: Start Again?

CGW Checks in on the Other Half of the Gaming World



Sega's DreamCast is getting lots of hype—so maybe that's why Sony and Nintendo are blowing lots of smoke about their own upcoming machines.

The first shots have been fired in Game Console War IV, with Nintendo and Sony answering Sega's DreamCast salvo not with hardware, but with psych warfare. The DreamCast, out now in Japan and set to ship in the United States before Christmas, is certainly an impressive system. But even with its next-generation PowerVR graphics, it's not a big enough jump to have you trading in your PC anytime soon.

At the Game Developers Conference in March, Sony showed off a number of dazzling PlayStation 2 demos, with real-time workstation-quality graphics wowing even the jaded developer crowd. That machine, however, won't ship in the U.S. until the end of 2000—at the earliest. Meanwhile, Nintendo announced that a group of ex-Silicon Graphics engineers known as Art-X were developing a next-generation machine for that company—but Nintendo won't even make specs available on the unit until the end of this year.

These early announcements by Sony and Nintendo break with the companies' usual tradition of keeping things under wraps until the last minute. The companies likely want to deflate any excitement about the DreamCast, in hopes that the machine will die in Sega Saturn-like obscurity while gamers wait another year for the Sony and Nintendo machines.

So how does all this affect PC gamers? While many have commented that prototype games on the PlayStation 2 blew away anything currently available on the PC, the same could be said in 1993 about games for the original PlayStation. By the time the new Sony and Nintendo machines reach U.S. shores, PC gaming technology will likely have caught up or surpassed them. So look at these new systems not as technological threats, but as previews of computer gaming to come.

The more significant effect will be the continued popularity of low-cost, high-quality game machines. These new units may serve to keep PC gaming in its niche, about a quarter the size of the console market. Although there are few console games with the depth of their PC cousins, the units' low price and ease of use means the mainstream will find them an attractive alternative to the PC market, with its higher cost of entry and cavalier "fix the game after it ships" attitude. —*Denny Atkin*

Playing Lately

Here's what our readers are blowing the most time on. ***(CGW Survey)***

	Last Month	Mos. on Chart
1. Half-Life (Havas Interactive)	—	1
2. Baldur's Gate (Interplay)	—	1
3. StarCraft: Brood Wars (Blizzard)	—	1
4. Might and Magic VI (New World/3DO)	2	10
5. NHL Hockey 99 (EA Sports)	—	1
6. Rainbow Six (Red Storm)	5	4
7. Grim Fandango (LucasArts)	—	1
8. Caesar III (Sierra/Havas)	4	2
9. Quake II (id Software/Activision)	3	9
10. Wing Cmdr Prophecy Gold (Origin/EA)	—	1

PC Data Best-sellers*

1. SimCity 3000 (EA)	9	$39
2. Sid Meier's Alpha Centauri (EA)	*	$41
3. Baldur's Gate (Interplay)	1	$44
4. Half-Life (Havas Interactive)	5	$38
5. Cabela's Big Game Hunter 2 (Activision)	4	$19
6. Deer Hunter II 3D (GT Interactive)	3	$19
7. StarCraft: Brood Wars (Havas Interactive)	2	$27
8. StarCraft (Havas Interactive)	6	$40
9. Deer Avenger (Havas Interactive)	11	$18
10. Microsoft Flight Simulator (Microsoft)	8	$50

**The top-selling games as of February 28, 1999, calculated by PC Data (Reston, VA).*

[Web Sites of the Month, continued from page 47.]

First, of course, check out www.gamespot.com for the best gaming news, reviews, and features.

DENNY'S PICK

www.simhq.com



Simulation Headquarters, the Blues News of flight-sim sites. If your hand almost never comes off your joystick (Ew! No, that's not what we meant. Who do you think we are, *PC Accelerator*?), this is the site to check out.

GEORGE'S PICK

www.arcadeclassics.com



Blast-from-the-past gaming rocks! Browse the finest selection of classic coin-op arcade games and buy that sit-down *Donkey Kong* you've been dreaming about since 1986.

JEFF'S PICK

www.gameguides.com/guides/baldurs/



Desslock's massive, exhaustive, online guide to BALDUR'S GATE is the ideal help site for those, like me, who spend more time reloading the game than actually playing it.

JOE'S PICK

www.homestead.com



This is a great, free site where you can build your own Web pages. It has an easy-to-use, Java-based, drag-and-drop interface, and designing pages is a snap.

JOHNNY'S PICK

www.intercom.no/~vidarn/gg/sp2scen.html



For those who can't get enough of the current conflict in the Balkans, check out the Serbian scenarios for STEEL PANTHERS II at the General's Guild site.

ROBERT'S PICK

www.themushroom.com



"For Dorks, by Dorks" is the motto of this very funny gaming Web site, modeled after The Onion.

SCOOTER'S PICK

www.gamespyder.com/

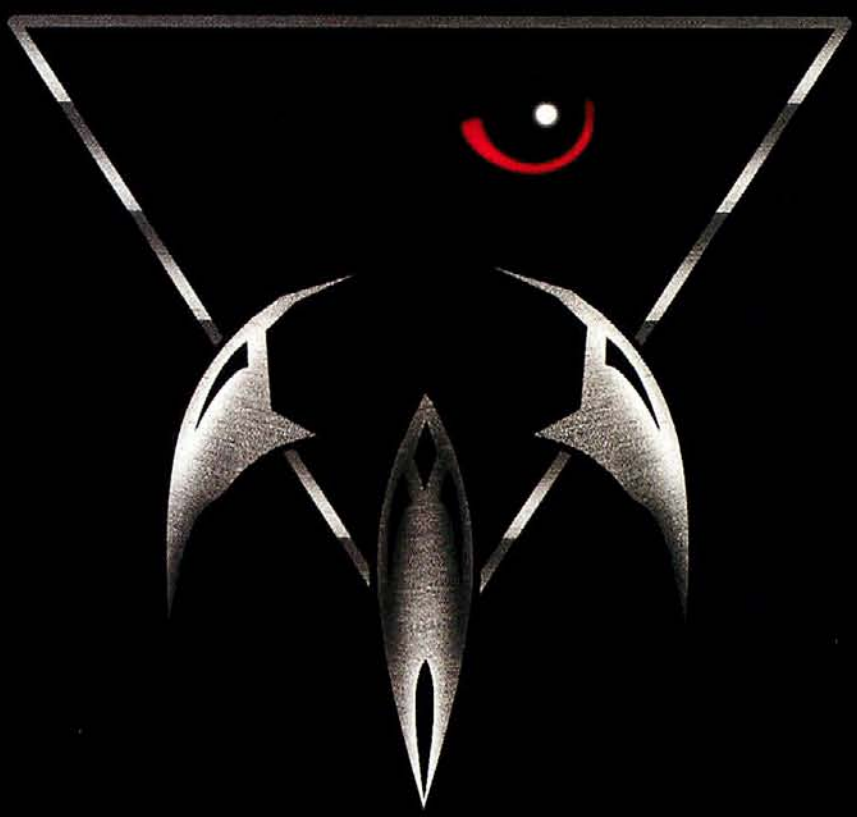


The new "Yahoo for gaming." They're still taking submissions, but if you

For years, gamers on tight budgets have had to resort to buying their PCs from the huge, impersonal business system manufacturers that don't know jack about gaming.

Glad that's over with.

Talon™



An aggressive new gaming system by Falcon Northwest with guts by 3dfx. Priced to move.

Summer '99

Falcon Northwest

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CGW Designer Profile:

Bioware's Dr. Ray Muzyka



Up Close and Personal With the Good Doctor Behind BALDUR'S GATE

1. With BALDUR'S GATE behind you, what are you working on now?
I wear several hats. I'm BioWare's joint-CEO and CFO (we now have about 55 employees). I also am the executive producer of our animation division and co-executive producer of our other two video game titles, one of which is MDK2 for the DreamCast and PC, and the other a super-secret online project.

2. You're a doctor...so what's the coolest operation you performed in medical school?
I always found **assisting neurosurgeons kind of cool**: I was surprised to see the array of tools they use—quite a few looking like melon-ball scoops, not surprising considering the consistency of the human brain. I actually wanted to be a general surgeon for a few years. **It's kind of neat to stick your arm into someone's abdomen** to feel their liver to rule out potential metastatic tumors. I now mainly practice rural emergency and family medicine.

3. Which character in BALDUR'S GATE is most like you?
Daevaorn, a 10th-level mage, is my personal character from my pen-and-paper role-playing days—except my character was chaotic good, rather than lawful evil.

4. Okay, my union contract obligates me to ask the standard "If you were stranded on a desert island" question. What games would you want with you?
WIZARDRY: PROVING GROUNDS OF THE MAD OVERLORD (yup, the first one, in all of it's black-and-white vector graphic and text glory) is something I never really got out of my system. I've always wanted to play SYSTEM SHOCK again, as well as ULTIMA UNDERWORLD...QUAKE, STARCRAFT, WARCRAFT, HALF-LIFE (**gotta love that sniper crossbow**). Maybe some of the great classic strategy games as well—CIVILIZATION, POPULOUS, SIMCITY.

5. If your team works late and you spring for pizza, do you always get Canadian bacon as a topping?
Usually, at least on one. **I've never actually understood this "Canadian bacon" thing** you American blokes come up with. Is Canadian bacon somehow different? The hogs are better up here somehow?

want to search for Web sites dealing with a particular game, this is a good place to start.



TOM'S PICK
www.classicgaming.com/
Cool (and extensive) emulator site with lots of ROMs.

TC'S PICK
http://reagan.tkblack.com/Diplomacy/
If you ever wondered what all the fuss is about, here's the place to start learning about the *Diplomacy* gaming phenomenon. Plenty of great links to other *Diplomacy* sites as well [note that there is no www in the URL].



WHY? WHY? WHY?

PROFESSIONAL BULL RIDER May Leave You, Er, Saddle Sore



And now, in the Truth Is Stranger Than Fiction Department, from the press release for PROFESSIONAL BULL RIDER, the latest "sports" game from Sierra Sports.

"The 2,000 pound virtual bulls are rank and ready to rumble. Perhaps the most unique feature of PROFESSIONAL BULL RIDER is competing in single events or throughout a career as the cowboy OR the bull. As the bull, you'll give cowboys the ride of their life."

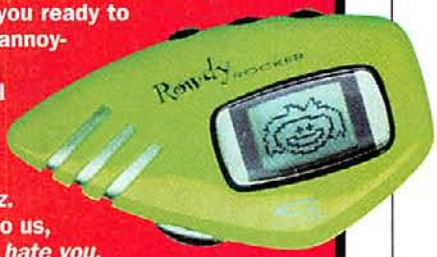
Insert joke here.

On second thought—maybe not.

Tchotchke of the Month

Tchotch•ke (choch'ke): slang, from Yiddish: a cheap, showy trinket
—American Heritage College Dictionary, Third Edition

With any luck, this month's Tchotchke of the Month will be smashed into small chunks of plastic by the time you read this. Why? Because the "Rowdy Rocker," as it is called, is an unbelievably annoying tamagochi-type toy that plays randomly generated heavy metal songs and periodically screams out rock-and-roll clichés like "Alright!" and "Are you ready to rock?!?!" thanks to our equally annoying managing editor, Joe Vallina, who leaves the dang thing on all day long.

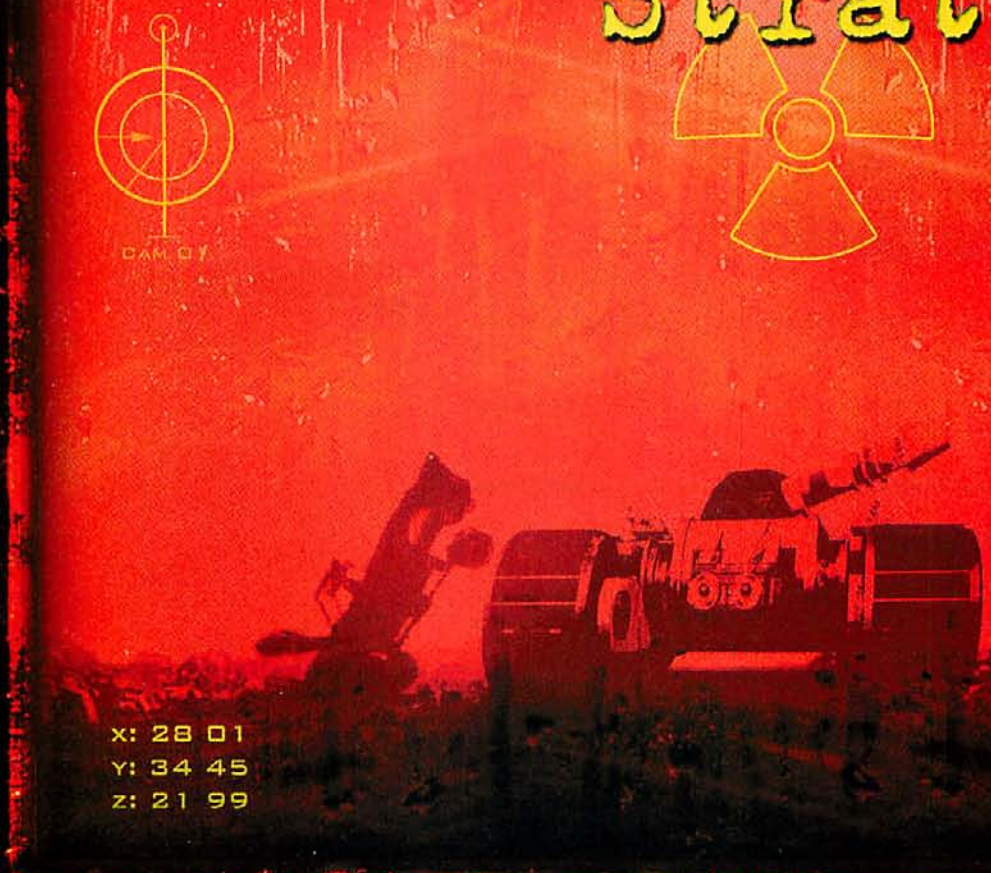


—Managing editor's note: Screw you, wuss rocker. Sabbath rulz, Duran Duran droolz.

We don't know who sent this to us, or why, but whoever you are: *We hate you.*

Redefining Real-Time Strategy

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$10 Rebate with purchase of PC version

- Research over 400 technologies which enable you to customize over 2000 unique battle units

- "This game should find its way from the shelf, to the register, to your computer." *Game Center*

- "A battle field worth fighting on." *Game Pro*

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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PC CD

Pumpkin Studios

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90% PC Gamer*
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"Warzone 2100's numerous innovations and sharp 3D graphics may change a few minds." *EGM*

WARZONE 2100™

Strategy By Design

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the heat is on...









PC CD

PUBLISHED BY VIDEOSYSTEM

DISTRIBUTED BY EIDOS INTERACTIVE

DEVELOPED BY Lankhor

EIDOS GAMES

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Key features

- Includes all 22 cars, 16 circuits and official data from the 1998 Formula One World Championship Season.
- Fantastic graphics and speed. Plus 3D card and Force Feedback support.
- Accurate simulation and fun-to-play arcade modes.
- 20+ camera angles and ability to create your own new camera positions.
- Multiplayer support for up to 12 players.
- Informative helicopter fly-over of each circuit.

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FIA FORMULA 1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

www.eidos.com

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LET FREEDOM REIGN

Follow in the footsteps of Scottish hero, William Wallace, as you unite clans, overcome the might of the English army and guarantee freedom for all future generations of Scots.

Based on the award-winning motion picture starring Mel Gibson, Braveheart combines a free-flow, real-time strategy engine with an expansive global management system.

In this historically accurate epic, there are no consolation prizes in the battle for freedom.

- Allows individual control of on-screen warriors going far beyond the traditional limits of unit management.
- Historically accurate 3D battlefields, using satellite data to 50 square meters, tests tactical and strategic skills.
- Seamlessly combines real-time gameplay within a turn-based, build an empire world.
- Choose among 16 historically accurate clans in your battle to restore freedom to Scotland.
- Multiplayer scenarios for up to 8 players on LAN or internet in both co-op or competitive modes.

EIDOS INTERACTIVE

RATING PENDING RP ESRB

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red lemon
red lemon studios | it's a game thing!







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BRAVEHEART™

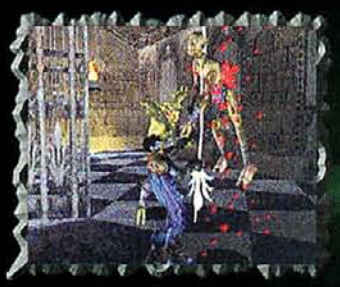
Go get a taste of clan war at www.eidosinteractive.com





Go to #150 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

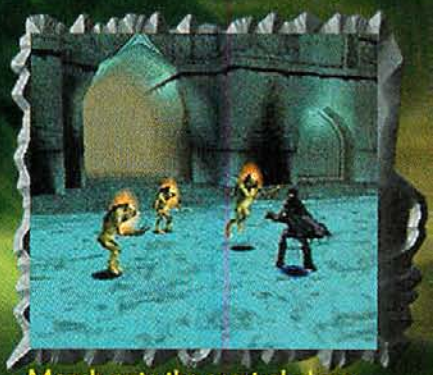
DESTROYING YOUR ENEMIES ISN'T ENOUGH...



"The elaborate architecture within these 3D environments is some of the best Next Generation has seen on the PlayStation."
–Next Generation

As Raziel, stalk the shadows of Nosgoth hunting your vampire brethren. Impale them with spears. Incinerate them with torches. Drown them in water. No matter how you destroy them, you must feed on their souls to sustain your quest – the ruin of your creator, Kain.





Morph onto the spectral plane and confront unique enemies and gameplay challenges

- Shift real-time between the material and spectral planes
- Dark gothic story



"...the completely revamped sequel to Legacy of Kain promises high immersion factor."
–Spin

PlayStation ®

TEEN T ESRB

PC CD ROM



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For the Ninth Time, Origin Rewrites the Role-playing Book

Ultima Ascen

by George Jones

ULTIMA ASCENSION begins with a jolt—literally. One evening, the Avatar (the virtuous hero who has saved Brittania at least eight times prior to now) dreams of a towering column of fiery stone rising from the earth, killing an old farmer in the process. Knowing that this is a sure sign something is wrong in his alternate reality, he rises from his bed. And the game begins.

You don't fiddle with menus or waste time with text-filled screens. After you install the game and witness your dream, you get right out of bed, put on your clothes, amble out of your bedroom, and jump into the heart of ULTIMA ASCENSION's gaming environment.

The Earth Moves

The popularity of the ULTIMA series comes from the unique blend of a highly developed universe, a well-paced plotline, and an unparalleled moral complexity that doesn't emphasize brutality. For the first time, however, ULTIMA ASCENSION is set in a 3D environment with an over-the-shoulder perspective. Before you worry that ASCENSION is some TOMB RAIDER action/adventure clone, however, ask yourself this: When was the last time Lara Croft had to save the world from eight pillars that are slicing her world apart like an orange, all while making sure she walks the proper moral path?

Also, *interactive* is more than just a buzzword in this game. As you move around the house after you wake up, you'll find that most everything in it actually works, from the alarm clock to the big-screen TV to the light switches. There's even a bread maker in the kitchen and a grill in the backyard that you can use to make steaks.

The backyard also functions as a training ground of sorts that allows you to practice combat skills, maneuvering skills, and yes—jumping skills. Settle down, ULTIMA VIII veterans; jumping is not a frustrating experience this time around. Instead of needing impossibly dexterous arcade-style reflexes, you jump onto rocks and over rivers in this game simply by moving your mouse to the spot you want to jump to and then clicking the mouse button. Combat is also a snap; you maneuver the Avatar around with the mouse or keyboard and press the appropriate key to attack. And the spellcasting is easier than ever. Once you discover a spell, you can easily incorporate it into your spell book by mixing the appropriate reagents for it a single time.



3D FIT FOR A KING Don't let the smooth 3D fool you—ULTIMA ASCENSION is anything but an action/adventure game.

A Radical Departure?

ASCENSION features the traditional elements that made the ULTIMA series famous. Character creation, for example, still occurs with the help of a gypsy fortuneteller, whom you'll find in the park behind your house. You answer a series of moral questions (You encounter a beggar. Do you give him food or do you just walk on by?) to determine your game character's attributes and moral standing.



GREAT BALLS OF FIRE Casting spells is easier than ever, but ULTIMA purists will still be able to mix up unique magic using reagents.

In what some may view as a move to attract the mainstream masses, the designers are simplifying some of the more stat-oriented aspects of traditional role-playing games. Instead of tracking scores in 4,835 different attributes and skill sets, this ULTIMA is a bit more intuitive: Numbers have been turned into descriptions with tangible benefits. As you gain experience, for example, you may find yourself becoming a journeyman and gaining an extra attack type.

It's the End of the World

Everything has gone screwy in Brittania. This once virtuous land has done a moral about-face. After completing the game's opening puzzles, we entered Britain, the capital city, and approached a flock of citizens listening to the mayor speak. After pushing our way to the front of the crowd—and being scolded by an older woman for kicking dust on her in the process—we were taken aback to hear the mayor praising himself for moving the homeless out of Britain and over to the swampy city of Paws. Britain, renowned city of compassion, ousting the unfortunate? There's something wrong here.

Such chaos is brought to you courtesy of the Guardian, an evil presence with whom the Avatar has clashed in two previous ULTIMAs. Worse, the fiery pillar you dreamed about is only one of eight, each of which is being pulled through the earth by the gravity of the moon. The pillars are pulling the moon out of orbit and into a collision path with Brittania. Complicating matters even more, each of the pillars is associated with

Ultima Ascension

GENRE: Role-Playing **RELEASE DATE:** Q4 '99
DEVELOPER: Richard Garriott/Origin
PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts



sion



OPEN WIDE AND SAY "AH" As usual, dungeon-crawling is hazardous to your health; thankfully, ASCENSION's one-touch hot-keys can help keep you prepared.

one of Brittania's eight virtues, explaining why the people of Brittania have become so damn selfish. Your task, in a nutshell, is to get to the bottom of the nature of the land's moral about-face and permanently fix it. You'll travel the lengths of ASCENSION's gorgeously rendered world to do so.

Alive and Living

Brittania's living, breathing environment features lush terrain types that make wandering through the gameworld much like moving across North America in accelerated time. Flat plains, hilly forests, and even snow-capped mountains are all a part of the landscape, and you'll even witness varying weather patterns in different regions. We saw an evening lightning storm (day becomes night in about two hours of real-time) in the mountains that left us convinced that outdoor environments are the best way to showcase a 3D engine.

As you move about the land, you'll encounter all manner of AI creatures and characters. You'll even find a love interest…of sorts. At one point during our play session, we were wandering through a hilly part of the world, when a thief startled us by sprinting out of the trees at us in an attempt to knock us out. And once you get into the dungeons, well…let's just say that the underground monsters are a bit larger down there.

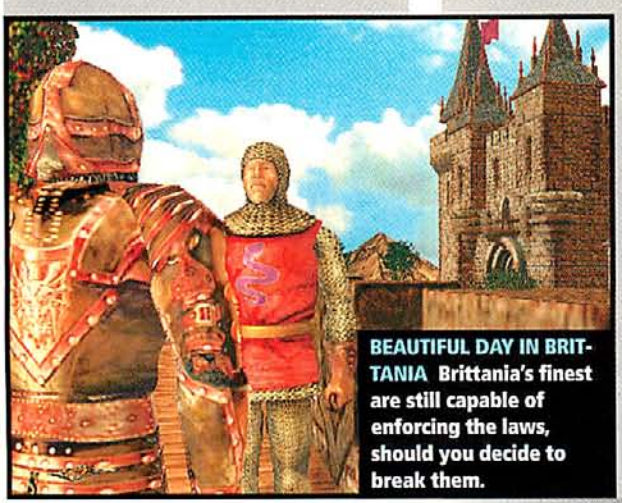
Conversations unfold naturally. To speak to someone, you approach them and, if they don't try to knock your head off, you start chatting. When you have specific questions, you select from a conversation menu.

The End of an Era?

It's entirely appropriate that ASCENSION will be released at the end of the millennium, given its grand scale and creator Richard Garriott's intentions of tying up all the loose ends that eight previous ULTIMA games have created. In ULTIMAs past, the Avatar has bailed Brittania out of whatever mess the country is in. But this time around will be different.

As you make the transition between our world and Brittania, you're told that this will be your last adventure there. What does this mean? Richard Garriott most definitely isn't telling (and neither are we). As ASCENSION unfolds, however, you will start to piece together answers regarding the very nature of the Avatar, his relation to Brittania, the significance of the eight virtues and three principles, and the meaning of the various events over his previous eight adventures. If this is his last adventure, our hero had better come up with a solution that will not just patch up Brittania's problems, but teach the folks there how to help themselves.

Contrary to anything you may have heard, ULTIMA ASCENSION is alive and very well, thanks to some stellar 3D graphics, evolutionary gameplay elements and—finally—the kind of living, breathing story-telling environment gaming has desperately needed. CGW



BEAUTIFUL DAY IN BRITTANIA Brittania's finest are still capable of enforcing the laws, should you decide to break them.

Fight Fans, Fear Not

ASCENSION will have plenty o' real-time 3D combat. While in combat mode, you'll use the mouse to orient yourself, the keyboard to move left and right, and a single key to execute an attack. At first, you'll only have a single move; as you grow more experienced, you'll add three other possible moves that can be accessed by holding down the Ctrl or Alt keys while pressing the attack button. One nice touch: Each weapon has its own repertoire of moves. With an axe your options may be chop/golf-swing/roundhouse/uppercut, but with a staff you'll be able to poke/sweep/vault-kick/spin. Wannabe Evander Holyfields can also resort to fisticuffs.

Ranged combat is just as easy. Simply line up your target by moving the targeting reticle onto it. If the cursor is yellow, you can fire away and be assured of striking the mark. If the cross-hairs are red, you'll have to aim a little higher to compensate for the distance.

One area where ASCENSION won't deviate too much from the RPG norm is in the weaponry category. In addition to run-of-the-mill swords, axes, and bows, you'll also be able to get your hands on magical weapons. Flaming swords, magical bows that do extra damage, and all sorts of unique weaponry lie in wait for the avid aventurer.

Finally, borrowing a page from DIABLO, the game interface features 12 handy, combat-friendly hot-keys that you can assign weapons, spells, or any items to. Perfect when you need to summon a quick lightning storm or your trusty two-handed sword.

Blood of the Sacred, Blood of the Damned

Gabriel Knight 3



by Johnny Wilson

The Jacobites might have thought a bit differently of Bonnie Prince Charlie if they had known the mystery underlying GABRIEL KNIGHT 3: BLOOD OF THE SACRED, BLOOD OF THE DAMNED (GK3). Designer Jane Jensen is no longer content with drawing us into mysteries that are tied into voodoo and werewolves. Now, she is deftly pulling together the rumors and conjecture, the theories and the shocking speculation that surround the most mesmerizing conspiracy of all time: the Holy Grail. GK3 has everything: a kidnapping, a treasure, a cover-up, a secret society, a reunion, and some of Jensen's classic use of the supernatural. Gabriel, our hero, is still the lugubrious, drawling bookstore owner and novelist by chance, who has inherited the title of *schattenjäger*—a shadow-hunter of the supernatural. He is still assisted and occasionally accompanied by Grace Nakimura, and he also runs into his old pal Mosely. Plus, there's a new supernatural adversary: the night visitors, Jensen's fresh take on vampires.

Like its predecessors, GK3 features terrific puzzles and an extremely well written story. It differs mainly in that you don't have the graphic novel effect of the first game (although there is a graphic novel introduction to the game) or the interactive video experience of the second. Now, the entire environment is 3D, and gameplay is friendlier as a result. You no longer have to walk Gabriel all over the screen in order to get him into position to see something. You can fly the camera independently; then, when you're ready, you click on the floor or on an object and Gabe immediately walks into the picture from off-camera. We also like the fact that the cursor lights up whenever it crosses a hot spot, thus doing away with those annoying "hunt the pixel" puzzles. Another improvement is that there is no onscreen toolbar unless you decide to call it up by right-clicking your mouse. This gives you a full-screen perspective at all times with a pop-up interface only when you really need it.

In addition to using a pop-up toolbar, the interface also has the capacity to grow. Want to talk to the innkeeper? Icons show up for each topic, reminiscent of the interface in another Holy Grail game, CIRCLE OF BLOOD. Want to attach an item to a verb for regular use? You handle everything with an easy click. The new 3D engine and improved interface make everything about GK3 easier, except the puzzles themselves.

Another major difference here is that instead of being divided into chapters (as in the first two games) GK3 is divided into days with several time blocks within each day. Each time block has several "must do" actions before you can advance to the next time block—and each time block has enough optional actions that it's highly unlikely that you'll be able to do them all in your first playing of the game.

Glastonbury Heir

The story itself begins with an invitation for Gabriel and Grace to meet an heir to the Scottish throne. Grace believes that this is because of Gabe's position as heir to the venerable Ritter heritage. Naturally, because of Gabe's heritage, the *schattenjäger* tradition comes into play. The principal characters meet in Paris and, after a sinister series of events, a chase sequence takes Gabriel to the south of France. There, in Rennes-le-Chateau, a small village in the Languedoc region, the mystery begins to be decoded.

Languedoc is a province noted for heresy,

Gabriel Knight 3

GENRE: Adventure
RELEASE DATE: Q2 '99
DEVELOPER: Jane Jensen
PUBLISHER: Sierra



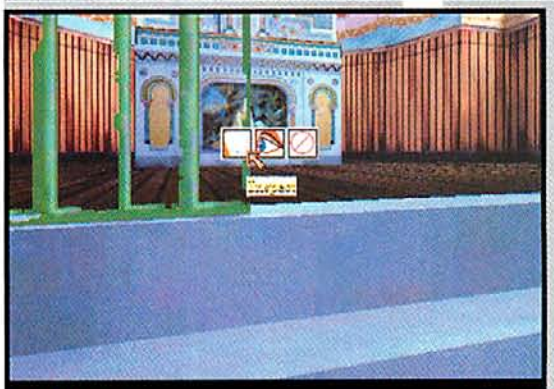
ONE SCREEN FOR ALL MANKIND GK3 gives you a full-screen perspective with a free-flying camera view, a pop-up command toolbar, and occasional cinematic cut-scenes within the 3D engine.



TOPICAL FRUIT Conversations throughout the game are driven by icons that reflect dynamically the topics that Gabriel has uncovered during the course of his investigation.



BANNER EAR Gabriel hides behind a banner in order to eavesdrop on a key conversation. Ambient audio adds depth to GK3, but important audio clues are close-captioned.



ALTAR EGO As in the "virtual museum" sections of the first two Gabriel Knight games, you'll be able to scrutinize items of interest—such as this altar piece in Rennes-le-Chateau—at your leisure.

witchcraft, and a mysterious treasure trove, reputed to include the Holy Grail—the chalice that Jesus used to serve the wine during the Last Supper and into which Joseph of Arimathea collected the blood of Christ while he was on the cross.

While those of Celtic descent would heed the Grail legends surrounding Glastonbury, Rennes-le-Chateau is a worthy rival with significantly more mysteries surrounding it.

It is a place where Mary Magdalene is more revered than the Madonna herself. It is the birthplace of the Cathars and the Priory of Sion. It is a mysterious place held holy since ancient times; a place where the mountainous geography is strangely symmetrical, forming a virtual pentacle of peaks for sacred bonfires and ritual observation. It is a locale where many believe that Egypt's Isis cult flourished in the days before the region's conversion to Christianity under Clovis I (circa AD 496, prior to his AD 507 victory over the Visigoths). It is the ancestral homeland of the Merovingian lineage, the long-haired and reputed magical kings of the land that would eventually become France. In short, a perfect place for a mystery.

The game re-creates the church at Rennes-le-Chateau with exacting detail, much the way GK2 did Mad Ludwig's castle. The strange devil holding up the holy water fount, the statue of Mary Magdalene with a skull at her feet, the extremely unusual Stations of the Cross, and bizarre inscriptions are presented in a 3D virtual museum in which you can fly the camera and examine anything.

Of course, purists may not like Jensen's addition of a hotel to the mysterious village and her use of a museum dedicated to Sauniere as a handy source of clues. Just remember, poetic license has been around at least since the time of Homer, and the use of a fictional hotel and a museum speeds up the pace considerably over having to travel around the countryside for clues.

Digital Divination

Fortunately for Grace and Gabriel, they are not on their own in figuring out this mystery. Since some of the mystery has to do with strange geometrical clues in paintings and natural landscapes, they are assisted by SIDNEY, a computer interface. SIDNEY will not only assist in following up on basic clues, but will also provide a rich, searchable database on Egyptian mythology and the ties to Isis and Osiris that you are likely to uncover in the search for the treasure.

Certain items have to be "scanned" into SIDNEY in order to solve the mystery. Indeed, you will have to superimpose geometrical shapes over these images in order to reach the proper conclusion. Naturally, this is no problem for gamers who are familiar with the literature concerning Rennes-le-Chateau. Books such as Henry Lincoln's *The Holy Place* and David Woods' *Genesis* feature diagrams superimposed over topographical maps all the time. Both researchers note that there is both a pentagon and a hexagon construction that overlay the geographical area.

For those who are into the mystery, placing points and shapes on a map has a real ring of truth. For others, this will still be an intriguing puzzle, since it hinges on one other vexing element. Jensen has taken a poem called "Le Serpent Rouge" and built a series of riddles around the wordplay in the verses. If you can figure out the secondary meanings and obscure references, then you'll have no trouble solving the geometrical puzzles.

Once out in the countryside, you'll face a timing puzzle or two. Think of it as basic surveillance. Indeed, you'll occasionally have to direct Gabriel to hide and observe in order to get the clues and answers you'll need to get to the endgame. This section has a very different look to it; but in effect, the overview map recalls the New Orleans map in the first game and the U-bahn map in the second.

All of this sleuthing serves as preliminary to the scenes in the underground temple, however. The temple contains puzzles based on paradoxes, chessboards, and more. Think of the motif as a mixture of Egyptian mythology, alchemical symbolism, and Gnostic philosophy. Nothing is what it appears. Considering the Arian and Catharite heresies that flourished in the Languedoc region, the mixture is perfect for the mystery.

With all of the conspiracy, heresy, treasure, and crime abounding in GABRIEL KNIGHT 3: BLOOD OF THE SACRED, BLOOD OF THE DAMNED, you could almost assume that the supernatural elements so prevalent in the first two games would be missing. You would be wrong. Jensen has weaved a vampire plot into the game (isn't this logical, given the emphasis on blood in the Grail legends?), and you're not likely to forget the antagonist in the final showdown. There is also an intriguing supernatural connection to the kidnapped baby that initiates the action.

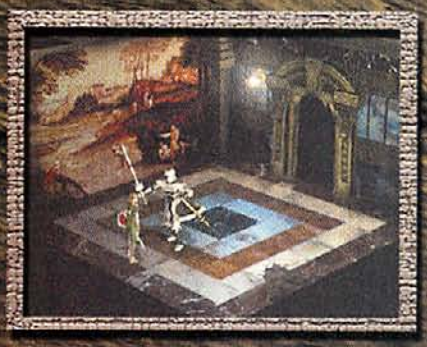
As with the previous games, GK3 won't frighten you with gore and nightmarish creatures, but it will mess with your mind. In any game in which Jesus, conspiracy, magic, and vampires intermingle, you'd expect to be more than a little disconcerted. As well-crafted as any of its ancestors and, if anything, even better written, GABRIEL KNIGHT 3: BLOOD OF THE SACRED, BLOOD OF THE DAMNED seems destined for controversy, if not preternatural success. CGW



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Dreamforge Takes PANZER GENERAL Into Eldar Space—With Attitude

Warhammer 40,000: Rites of War



CARNIFEX The encyclopedia is a treat, even if you're not a *Warhammer 40K* fan.

by Samuel Baker II

Games Workshop's *Warhammer 40,000* (affectionately known simply as *40K*) has for many years offered a dark, compelling, and competitive science-fiction universe for board and miniatures enthusiasts. PC games based on this universe have yet to fully capture the flavor—or the sales numbers—of the original. Part of the reason for this has been a failure to re-create the stunning, if sometimes bizarre, graphics of the tabletop game.

WARHAMMER 40,000: RITES OF WAR (RITES) suffers from no such handicap. The graphics are delightful: Each unit has its own idle, attack, and death animations. The effects of weapon fire are appropriately depicted; troops with heavy flamers, for instance, graphically roast their targets.

But there's more to RITES than just pretty explosions. The game deals in detail with the trials and constant battles of the Eldar—essentially space elves with attitude—a once-great race now wandering space in huge starships. As a lord of the Eldar, you are tasked with recovering a number of artifacts thought to exist on the fringes of the former Eldar Empire.

RITES steers you through three story arcs of eight scenarios each, featuring more than 30 different Eldar, 20 Tyranid, and 20 Imperial units that include Eldar Avatars, Tyranid Hive Tyrants, Imperial Terminators, and Blood Angels Space Marines. In addition to the full campaign, there are five multiplayer scenarios and seven for solo play. The single-player scenarios are split into minicampaigns for the Imperial and Eldar forces. The game comes with a complete scenario/campaign editor that allows full editing of objectives and scripts. If you really want to play the Tyranid (think *Aliens* with technology), you can roll your own campaign once you tire of the canned missions. Any side is available for multiplayer games.



TALES FROM YOUR ELDARS One thing's for sure: PANZER GENERAL never looked like this.

WARHAMMER General

RITES uses a simplified version of SSI's classic PANZER GENERAL engine, with each unit rated for life, armor, melee, leadership, ranged-attack strength, initiative, range, spotting, and movement. As you proceed through the campaign, your units' abilities develop, adding a nice RPG element. Units don't lose experience when taking on replacement points—which should lead to looser, more risk-taking play. Units may also be held in barracks until needed.

According to producer Sam Clifford, SSI chose the standard-size *Warhammer 40K* army sets rather than the *Epic* scale used in FINAL LIBERATION (SSI's most recent PC *Warhammer*) to make the game more personal. In RITES, the four arms types—air, infantry, armor, and artillery—all seem to be well integrated into the design. Eldar infantry, for example, can become increasingly specialized, with many different paths of advancement that aren't open to vehicles. As commander, you choose the aspect of the particular Eldar god you want your infantry to emulate, giving your troops greater power in one area but less in others.

You'll buy units and upgrades by expending glory points, which work much the way prestige does in PANZER GENERAL, except that RITES is more forgiving. If a unit is completely eliminated, its experience is lost, but the points expended on it are returned so that you may recover from defeat without hitting the reload button.

Even in this early version, the computer opponent does a credible job on the battlefield. Once contact is made, enemy units advance quickly to pick out and engage targets. Units don't always fight to the death, but engagements are typically *Warhammer*-bloody, and every turn usually involves the elimination of some units, even in the smaller battles.

Given the talent that's involved here, this seemingly bizarre marriage of the popular PANZER GENERAL system and the quirky *Warhammer 40K* universe could create the mass-market hit that Games Workshop fans have been looking for. Better yet, the game should be enjoyable even for those who don't know the difference between a Tyranid and an Orc—or a Zerg. CGW

Warhammer 40,000: Rites of War
GENRE: Strategy/Wargame **RELEASE DATE:** Q2 '99
DEVELOPER: Dreamforge **PUBLISHER:** SSI/Mattel





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Diplomacy

Hasbro Unveils the Crown Jewel of Multiplay Manipulation

by Johnny Wilson



THIS SHAM IS MY SHAM Tiny flags indicate which heads of state are negotiating with which other heads of state in a given conference room.

The Kennedy clan played it in the White House. It was Henry Kissinger's favorite game. Generations of college students played it in their dormitory lounges. Hundreds of fanzines have carried the results of play-by-mail games using its system and hundreds of variants. In fact, it has been played by email since the days of Dow Jones' Source and CompuServe. Russell Sipe, founder of *CGW*, began the earliest games on both information services.

The game, of course, is *Diplomacy*. Its popularity is due to the fact that there is no luck involved. There are no random die rolls, no spinners, no "get coprophagic and die" cards, and no random-effect charts. You get what you play for. It is a social game in which you must negotiate, compromise, and improvise, as well as strategize, in order to win. If you can manipulate your opponents and do unto them before they can do unto you, you win. If not, you can get even with them in the next game.

Remembrances of Games Past

The boardgame is set in pre–World War I Europe. Each of seven players represents the head of a country (England, France, Germany, Russia, Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Turkey) during a negotiation phase, order-writing phase, and execution/resolution phase. In other words, you try to get your friends to do what you want them to do. Then everyone writes down what they are *actually* going to do in secret. Next, the moves are read and the referee determines what happens from the orders, including resolution of any conflict. Each country tries to capture as many resource centers as possible, in order to build enough armies and fleets to ensure that the player's motherland becomes the last country standing.

It's always hard to get seven people together at the same time for several hours of gameplay—no matter how social the game. For that reason, a play-by-mail approach to *Diplomacy* has long been a popular option, as has a play-by-email version. The downside of these games by mail is that they often take more than a year to complete. What about the person who wants to play *Diplomacy* now?

World War Fun

The original C-64 and PC versions of DIPLOMACY were failures due to poor computer opponents and poor graphics. It was impossible in these computer games to see what you could easily see in a face-to-face boardgame: Who was negotiating with whom. And if you could get friends over to hotseat the game in front of the computer, you were better off playing the boardgame.

In this game, we finally have a playable computer version of DIPLOMACY. It features an elaborate iconic interface that enables you to negotiate alliances, nonaggression pacts, and detailed plans for lending support with other countries. In the version that we played, it was still impossible to spell out some of the complex quid pro quo terms that you'd be likely to hammer out in a human game, but the good news is that you can make simple deals with the artificial heads of state.

Even better news is that finally you can play the multiplayer game on the Internet with all-human leaders or with a mixture of human and artificial heads of state—so you don't have to round up exactly six of your buddies for the best possible seven-player game. Better yet, you don't need to have one of the players act as referee anymore, and you don't have to worry about other players changing the orders of their allies as they read them (an old canard in the face-to-face games). The program adjudicates each move, and the orders must be saved before you get to the resolution phase.

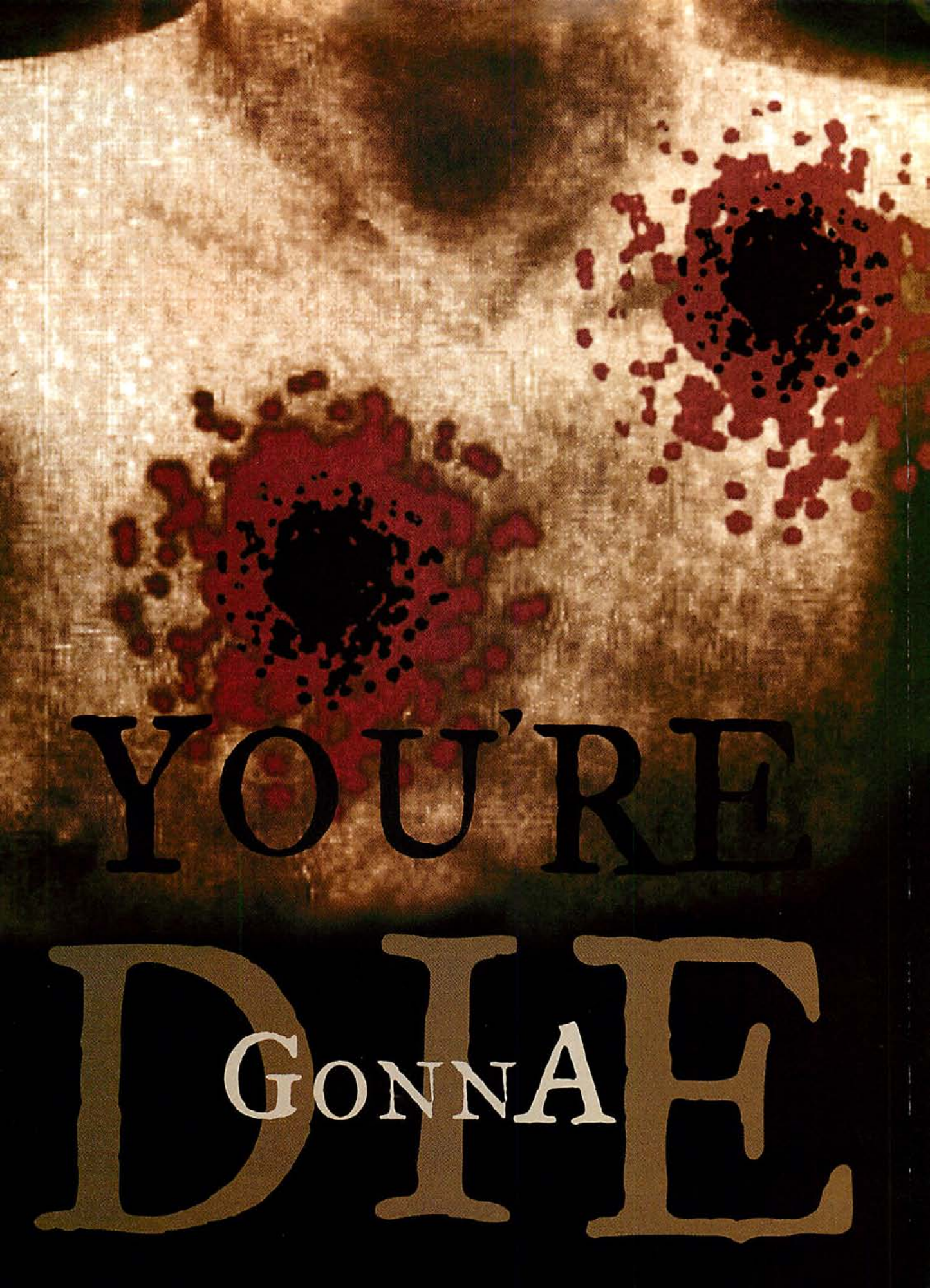
The bad news is that no artificial head of state can be as sneaky or conniving as a human opponent. Further, the computer game doesn't permit you the joy of concocting propaganda, as do the face-to-face or play-by-mail and email games. Still, even though it's unfinished, this version of DIPLOMACY looks like it could make you a Kennedy or a Kissinger (if you pardon the anachronism). Rest assured that *CGW* supports Hasbro's latest assault on the retail channel. CGW



NO ALPHABETICAL ORDER In play-by-mail and play-by-email games, the order phase consisted of alphabet-soup directions (F-ANK, and so forth). Here, you use the map and the iconic interface to input orders.

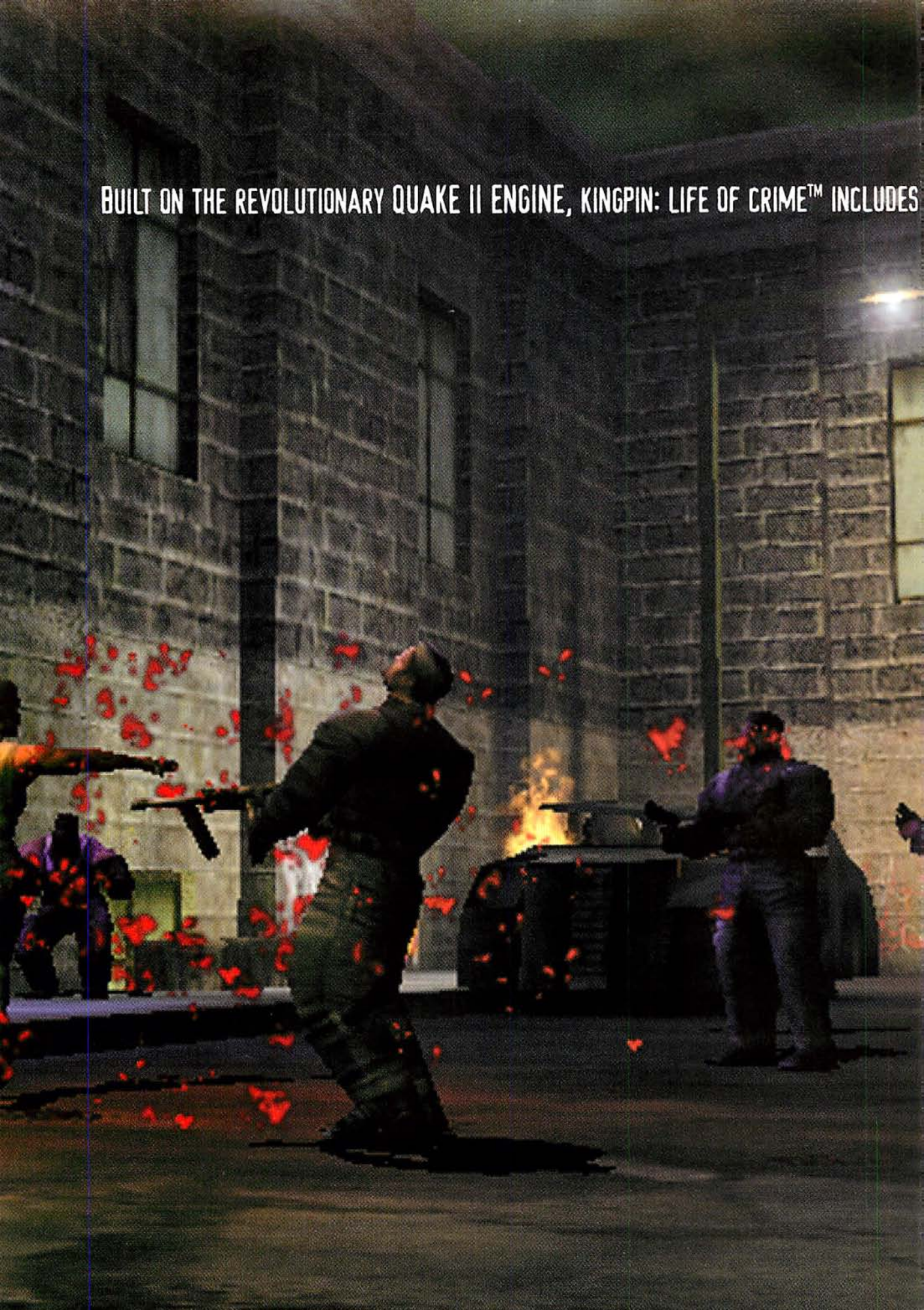
Diplomacy

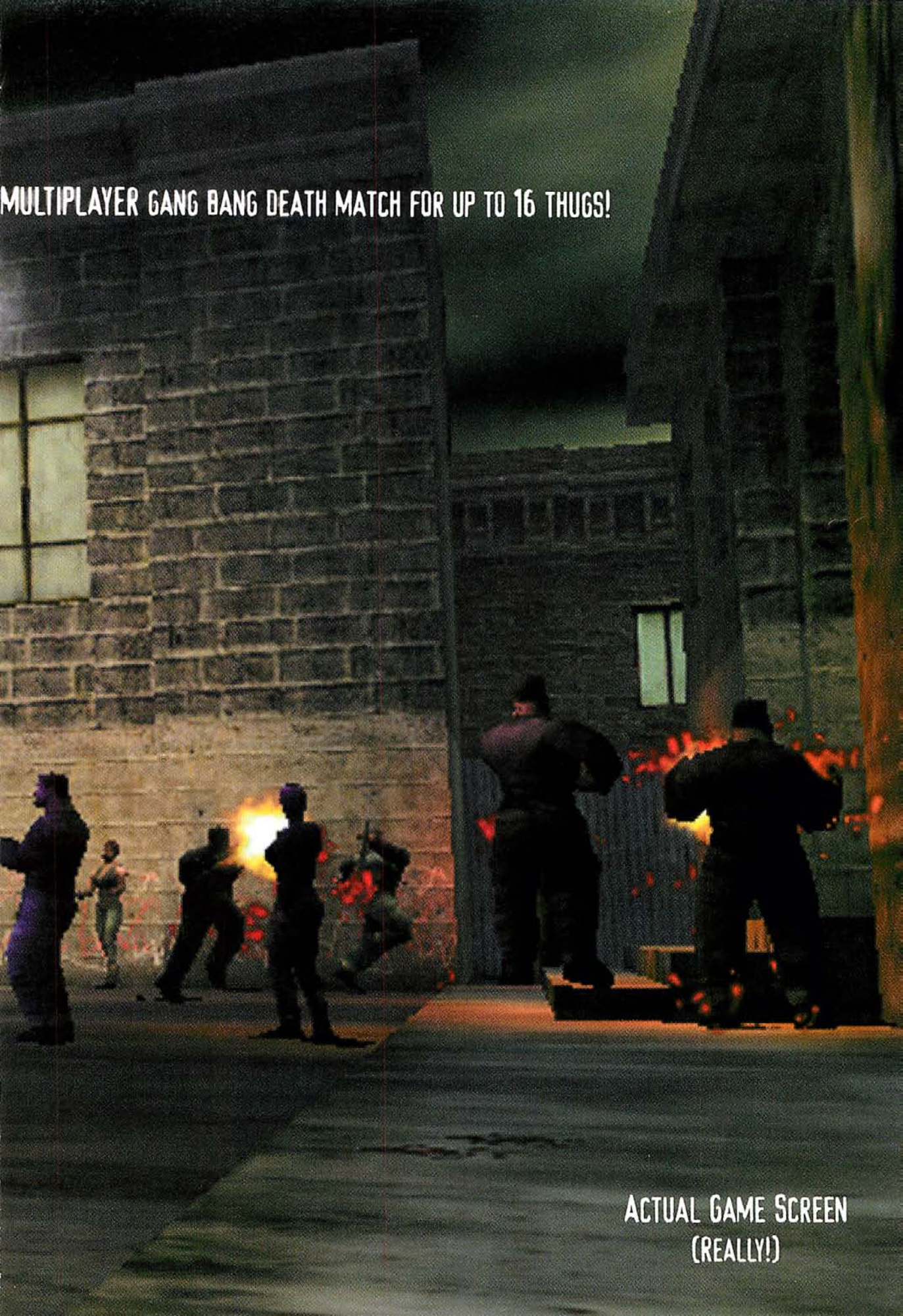
GENRE: Strategy **RELEASE DATE:** Q3 '99
DEVELOPER: Meyer-Glass Interactive
PUBLISHER: Hasbro Interactive


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This Real-Time Strat Title Is Anything but Tired

Metal Fatigue

by Robert Coffey

Who doesn't love a shiny new butt-kicking giant robot armed with missile-launching legs and a viciously humming energy sword? Thundering behemoths with an insatiable appetite for destruction are one of the cornerstones of our nation, our judicial system, our very way of life. Oh, and computer games; there are lots of them in computer games, too. But gamers with a thirst for enormous-robot mayhem have generally had to limit themselves to just one ambulatory skyscraper when gaming. That will change with the fall release of METAL FATIGUE, a real-time strategy title that lets you build, command, and design armies of 15-story bipedal warriors called combots in a fight to control mysterious alien technology.



HACKING AND SLASHING **A Rimtech combot winds up then chops off the arm of an enemy Milagro unit. Researching such lopped-off limbs will encourage and reward gamers for engaging the enemy instead of building up for dull rushes.**

A House Divided, A World Divided Too

Sent as part of an investigating force to a distant planet, three brothers help defeat a drone robot at an ancient alien complex. In possession of a powerful new alien weapon, the brothers argue and eventually splinter off and become guiding forces of three separate CorpoNations. All of this is revealed in an anime-flavored cut-scene that sets up the premise of the game. Gamers will play through METAL FATIGUE as each of the brothers, thus getting the opportunity to wield the unique weaponry and technology of each faction.

While most combat will be ground-based, there will be two additional theatres of war: subterranean and orbital. Even though the build that I played was pre-alpha, the sense of scope and challenge in the game is pretty much unmatched in gaming today: Gamers will have to be able to launch base assaults on terra firma while drilling underground invasion tunnels to an enemy base while enduring a withering barrage of bombing from orbiting enemy platforms. Yikes.



ROBO-RUMBLE **Different technology means each faction will sport its own look, as evidenced in this free-for-all.**

Though every unit will be able to fight on the ground, only flying units (including flying combots) will be able to access the orbiting theatre of war, and only tanks and the like will be able to move in the cramped confines of the underground theatre. To get to and from the subterranean tunnels, you'll have to send your vehicles down via elevators. Elevators can be built from underground—perfect for launching an attack smack in the center of an enemy base. But be warned: Elevators are neutral structures that can be used by anyone, including enemies.

Even in its early stages, the interface is up to handling the task at hand, allowing you to monitor all three maps onscreen at once and jump to a hotspot anywhere in the world with a single mouse click. Once you arrive in a war zone, you view the action via a mouse-driven multimetric camera similar to that of MYTH (the camera can be whipped above for a more traditional, top-down view). Unit commands are accomplished via standard RTS mouse and hot-key combinations.

Build the Ultimate Killing Machine

METAL FATIGUE's unit mix will include familiar fare, such as tanks and jets, but the real focus (and the key to winning) will be on the combots. These earth-shaking warriors will have technology unique to each CorpoNation; one race will rely on stealth and cloaking technology, while another will just have great big guns that shoot great big bullets.

Each combot is made of four distinct body parts: right arm, left arm, torso, and a set of legs. Combots are built individually by selecting components and then combining them to create a working unit. For example, you could construct a combot with missile-firing legs, a cloaking torso, a chain-gun arm, and an arm with a power shield. The mix-and-match nature of combot construction means that you can adjust your combot design—and therefore your strategy—more or less on the fly.

The ability to jettison parts is crucial to METAL FATIGUE's strategy. Several weapons, mostly energy swords and power saws, are built to be amputating instruments: Equipping a combot with one of them introduces the possibility of severing an enemy's arm. Should you do that, you can simply drop your old arm, snap the enemy's arm on, and, presto!, you've got a whole new combot. Even better, you can then take the new arm back to your base to research it so that your forces will be able to produce it themselves. Besides letting gamers expand their faction's technology base beyond the 20 or so technologies they start with, it forces gamers to fight for upgrades instead of sitting back, mining resources, researching, and building up for a humdrum game-ending rush. It's a great design element that should ensure almost constant engagement and action.

METAL FATIGUE is definitely a title to watch out for when it ships later this year. CGW



Metal Fatigue

GENRE: Real-Time Strategy
RELEASE DATE: Q3 '99
DEVELOPER: Zono • **PUBLISHER:** Psygnosis

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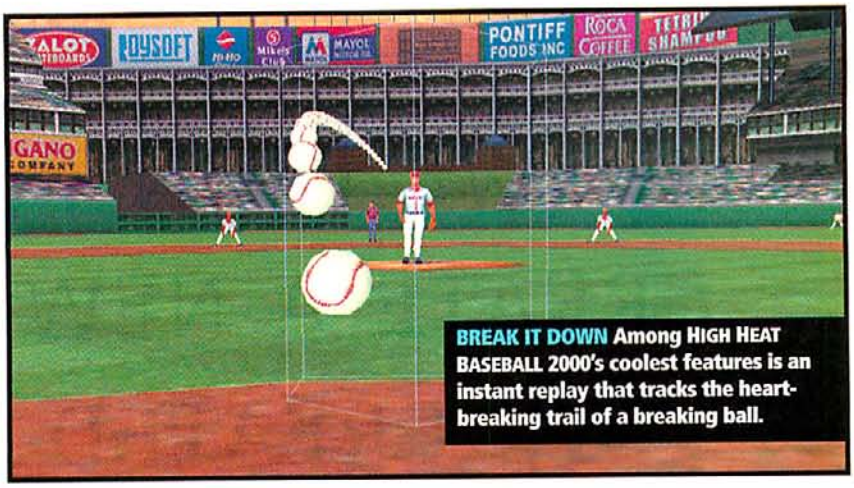
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BREAK IT DOWN Among HIGH HEAT BASEBALL 2000's coolest features is an instant replay that tracks the heart-breaking trail of a breaking ball.

High Heat Baseball 2000

Last Year's Promising Rookie Could Be This Year's All-Star

by Robert Coffey

Sporting a brand new MLB license, a 3D engine, and improvements in almost every facet of the game, HIGH HEAT BASEBALL 2000 (HH2K) is the baseball title to watch this year. HH2K could be the first sports game in years to give the EA Sports dynasty a real run for the money.

Building a Contender

The design team has made a real effort to address last year's shortcomings, and it appears to be paying off. The horribly animated 2D players of last season have been traded for a roster full of 3D polygonal players. The animations are much more lifelike, with believable swings and relief pitchers who drop down and sidearm the ball. Incidental animations such as pitchers throwing up their arms in frustration at a bad call or batters who stumble across the plate after lurching out of the way of an inside fastball give the game a real major-league feel. Once Team .366 smoothes out the somewhat jarring transitional player animations present in the pre-beta version we played, HH2K could be as good looking as TRIPLE PLAY.

3DO has wisely shelled out the bucks for a MLB license, so that gamers will finally be able to play with the big boys. A draft has been added and players will have the ability to play seasons of 16, 81, or 162 games. Regrettably, there currently are no plans to let you create custom leagues. Why, with the wild popularity of rotisserie leagues, designers continue to downplay the appeal of a custom league utility is beyond me, but, hey, I'm just an enormous fan who knows at least eight other guys that would love play in a custom league. Still, should you decide to run a league with your buddies, HH2K should support hotseat, LAN, and Internet play.

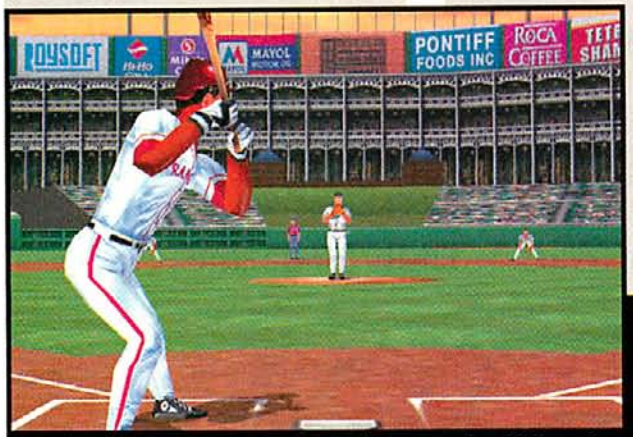
Franchise Player

The best news is that the gameplay looks to be even better than last year, (which, despite its flaws, played more like real baseball than any other game). Managerial options have been expanded, letting wannabe dugout geniuses guard the lines or set up for the double play, and a real bullpen has been implemented so you'll actually have to manage your pitchers. Anyone who played the first game will also be glad to hear that game speed is now adjustable, letting you keep CPU-controlled pitchers from quick pitching you into oblivion.

The statistical model has been beefed up, keeping track of split stats as well as rating every player in various batting, fielding, and pitching abilities. If the game's stat engine works as promised, gamers should see the realistic ebb and flow of major league baseball over the course of a season, as unhittable pitchers suffer through occasional rocky starts and homer-launching sluggers endure cold spells.

The most promising sign that Team .366 is onto something came in one game I played. Down by four runs with two out in the bottom of the ninth, I hit what seemed to be a game-ending grounder when the opposing team made an error that let the hitter reach first. A series of singles followed and I won the game.

If HIGH HEAT BASEBALL 2000 can consistently capture the intangible Bill Buckner quality that makes baseball *baseball*, then it could well be the title that computer baseball fans have been waiting for. CGW



RED SKIES AT NIGHT A strong 3D engine supporting high resolutions and graphic grace notes like this twilight Texas sky should push HIGH HEAT BASEBALL 2000 to the top of the eye candy heap.

The Other Boys of Summer

While Accolade's HARDBALL series stagnates and Sierra's FRONT PAGE SPORTS BASEBALL line has been killed, there still will be plenty of competition for HIGH HEAT 2000 this season. A new TRIPLE PLAY game will once again flex EA Sports' considerable muscles in another steroid-enhanced arcade version of America's pastime. Last year's VR BASEBALL showed promise and takes the field this spring as BASEBALL EDITION 2000, sporting even better graphics and a revamped, friendlier interface. Finally, Microsoft is going after the crowd in the cheap seats with the budget-priced MICROSOFT BASEBALL. Think of it as the journeyman utility player of the group—perhaps not the best player on the field, but still able to make the routine plays and blessed with a nice low contract.

High Heat Baseball 2000

GENRE: Sports RELEASE DATE: Q2 '99
DEVELOPER: Team .366 PUBLISHER: 3DO

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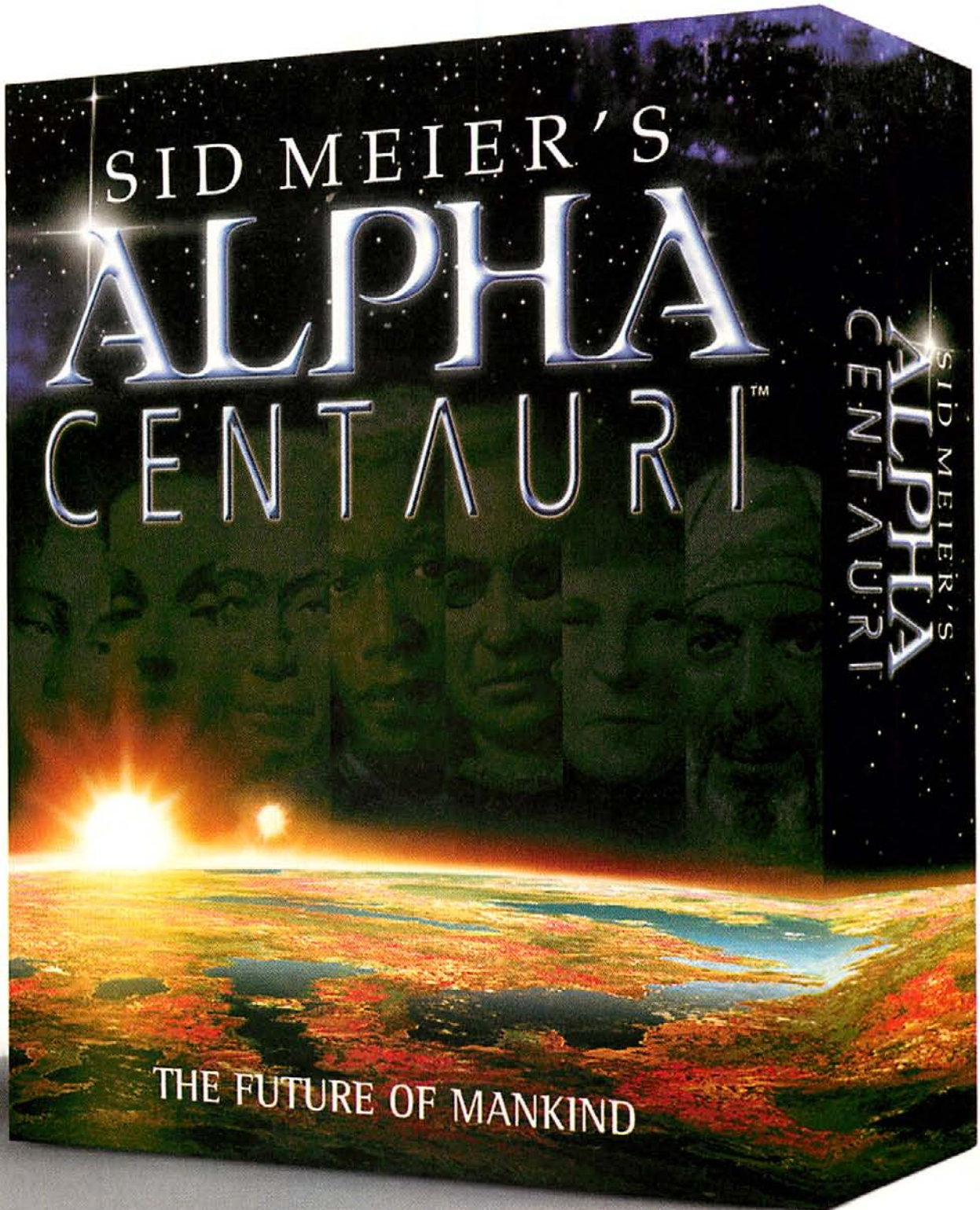
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The Richest of Real-time Strat Games Gets Richer

Seven Kingdoms II

by Terry Coleman



WAR IS A MANY-TENTACLED THING SEVEN KINGDOMS II revels in the differences between historical and neo-mythic. Here, Fryhtan hordes become the Carthaginians' ultimate nightmare.

Trevor Chan is one designer who can never be accused of insulting the intelligence of his fans. Booting up Chan's CAPITALISM, for instance, is as close to a crash course in high-end cutthroat economics as you're likely to get this side of Harvard Business School. But if you aren't careful, dealing with anything near that kind of depth in a typical real-time strategy game can quickly have you longing for the comparatively modest tech tree of AGE OF EMPIRES.

With that in mind, we thought it was time to take another look at Chan's upcoming SEVEN KINGDOMS II. My main concerns have always been that the look of SEVEN KINGDOMS II might have trouble competing with more graphically delectable fare like STARCRAFT, and that the interface wouldn't sufficiently help you keep track of the wide range of activities you can perform.

Fryhtan Dreams

Well, in the latest build from I-Magic, the interface is cleaner, the crisp new buildings tower over the landscape, and you can actually tell a Mongol soldier from a Viking. The Fryhtans, those pseudomythical beings born from the darker warlike recesses of Chan's fertile mind, have an even greater role here than in the original game. Not only do they sport more arcane technology and new magic spells but you can also play the Fryhtan Empire, driving puny humans before you.



The variety of scenarios and campaigns is staggering, and Chan is trying to pull off a random campaign generator that could be the most dynamic we've seen. There are four new human civilizations—Carthaginian, Roman, Indian, and Celtic—with a number of new abilities: ninjas for Japan, Druid Magic for Celts, and the like. Heroes make their first appearance as well, though these don't seem to overwhelm play in the manner of MASTER OF MAGIC. Having Hannibal, Genghis Khan, and Richard the Lionhearted combine forces to drive out the Fryhtan menace may not be historical, but it's a total kick—and it requires that you master the arts of diplomacy as well as combat.

Like its predecessor, SEVEN KINGDOMS II is more sophisticated, and thus more difficult, than the usual real-time clickfest. In addition to new battlefield tactics such as formations, there are a number of new research paths in the rich technology tree. I particularly liked using espionage, and the enhanced military tech available really enhances gameplay—though I'm not yet sold on the advanced axe-throwing ability of the Vikings, especially when facing the Fryhtan antihero Bregma, Master of Insects.

All in all, I found plenty to enjoy here. Amid the overcrowded real-time strategy field, SEVEN KINGDOMS II has its own identity, depth to spare, and maybe even graphics that are polished enough to convince the skeptical. CGW

Seven Kingdoms II

GENRE: Strategy
RELEASE DATE: Q3 '99
DEVELOPER: Enlight Software
PUBLISHER: Interactive Magic

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The Operational Art of War II

From Here to Eternity With TalonSoft's New Wargame

by Marc Dultz

Last year, THE OPERATIONAL ART OF WAR ably modeled modern combat at the often nebulous operational command level. For 1999, the award-winning turn-based wargame system moves several steps further, now portraying conventional warfare from the climactic days of 1956 to the close of the millennium.

Anywhere New to Fight?

THE OPERATIONAL ART OF WAR II (TOAW II) will reportedly cover many of the principal military engagements waged during this turbulent time frame, including America's ill-fated involvement in the Vietnam War, three Arab-Israeli wars, the protracted Iran-Iraq conflict, and Operation Desert Storm. What's more, TOAW II will depict several hypothetical, "what if" scenarios, including a 1962 invasion of Cuba by the United States, a supposed Sino-Soviet conflagration in the late 1960s, several different NATO-versus-Warsaw Pact showdowns in Europe, a second Korean conflict (circa 1999), resumption of hostilities between India and Pakistan, and even an invasion of Taiwan by Communist China.

As in TOAW, the units and maps in TOAW II will vary in scope and scale, with units ranging in size from individual companies to entire corps, and hexes measuring anywhere from 2.5km to 50km across. In addition to a simplified (and welcome) play option that will enable players to issue default orders to their units, TOAW II will contain a much more detailed treatment of nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) weapons, including the incorporation of certain triggering events that may escalate their usage.

Anything New to Blow Up?

Beyond some subtle graphical improvements, the game will feature new rules that will give gamers much more control over the employment of their artillery forces. In addition, TOAW II will more realistically portray the military concept known as command, control, and communications (C3) by introducing command, support, and civilian groups to each side's military hierarchy. While these specialized personnel will attend to various supply and maintenance functions for each combat unit, there may be instances when the unit in question will be paralyzed for a turn or two if its staffers are killed in battle. And although the unit may still be operating at 100 percent readiness, it may not be able to resume normal military operations until its cadre of specialized personnel has been totally re-formed.

Loads of new units and equipment will be featured, too, such as attack and transport helicopters, man-portable antitank and antiair weaponry, surface-to-air (SAM) missiles, mobile artillery batteries, and jet aircraft. While the equipment database will reportedly be twice that of TOAW, all of the weapons capabilities have been completely recalculated, taking into account the effect of high-explosive antitank (HEAT) rounds versus kinetic armament; and different grades of armor, from laminate and composite shielding to steel outer coverings and reactive cells. Moreover, TOAW II will utilize an all-new antiarmor combat resolution system that is based upon a single shot–single hit algorithm rather than on the massed-fire methodology employed in TOAW.

Civil and military police detachments will actually play a vital role in the game, reducing a unit's movement cost whenever it attempts to pass through densely populated areas such as towns and villages or along roads choked with refugees. Several types of transport helicopters will also be modeled, based upon their airmobile lift capacity (1 ton, 3 tons, or 8 tons) and subjected to certain lift radius restrictions. In fact, each ground unit will now be rated according to its transport weight (measured in metric tons), with some units, such as armored forces, requiring heavy-lift transport helicopters to move from one area to another.

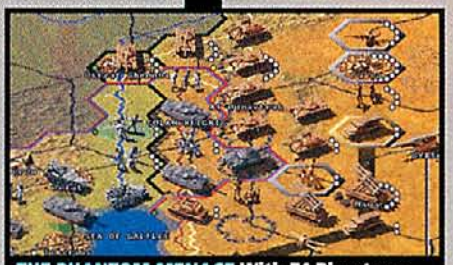
What About That Editor?

The scenario editor is being streamlined as well and will boast a variety of new editing tools and other player-requested features. Finally, many of the scenarios being designed for TOAW II will feature specially designated exclusion zones that will temporarily prevent gamers from moving their forces into or out of the region. Although gamers will be able to examine friendly units within an exclusion zone, they won't be able to move them until an external event triggers their release.

While TOAW II may look and feel remarkably similar to its award-winning predecessor, the mechanics of play have been refined, and now more than ever the game provides players with a poignant and ingenious look at the vagaries of modern-day combat. CGW



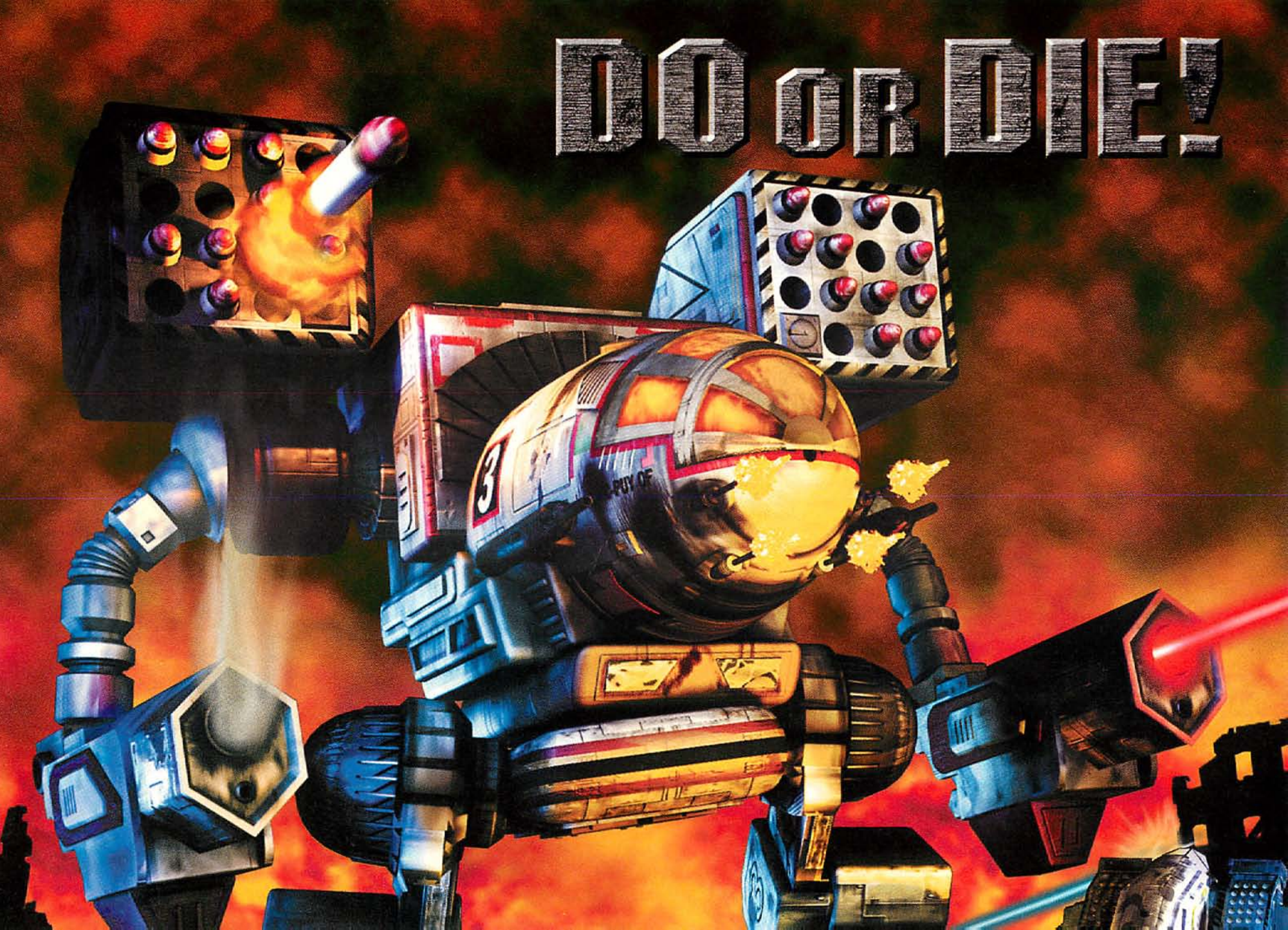
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The Operational Art of War II

GENRE: Strategy/Wargame **RELEASE DATE:** Q2 '99
DEVELOPER: Norm Koger
PUBLISHER: TalonSoft/Take 2


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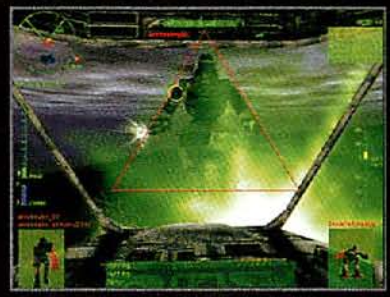
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501 CHEATS

COMPILED BY JESSE HIATT

When most people think of cheating, they picture themselves looking across a poker table at a loaded derringer. Well, this ain't poker, friends. It's *your* game, you bought it, and you can do whatever you want with it. Cheat codes and Easter eggs can get you through a tough spot, grant access to a secret level, provide a peek behind the curtain, or give insight into a programmer's twisted mind. We've sifted through all the junk out there and given you 501 cheats that actually work. Just keep in mind that we're not responsible if you use them in a multiplayer game and get yourself shot.

AGE OF EMPIRES

These codes also work in RISE OF ROME so we thought they were worth reprinting. As above, just type these codes in the chat window.

diediedie All units die; you win
resign You resign
reveal map Reveals entire game map
pepperoni pizza Gives 1000 food
coinage Gives 1000 gold
woodstock Gives 1000 wood
quarry Gives 1000 stone
no fog Removes fog-of-war
hari kari Commit suicide; you lose
medusa Villagers become medusas (When medusas die they become black riders; when black riders die, they become heavy catapults.)
gaia Lets you control the animals, but you have to give up control of your human units; good when used with **king arthur** and **grantlinkspence** in RISE OF ROME
flying dutchman Changes juggernauts into flying dutchmen that can soar over the land
steroids Gives instant building ability (which wears off over time)
home run You win
killX eliminates player in starting position X
bigdaddy Gives you a black Chevy Camaro with rocket launcher
big momma Gives you a white Chevy Camaro with rocket launcher

AGE OF EMPIRES: RISE OF ROME

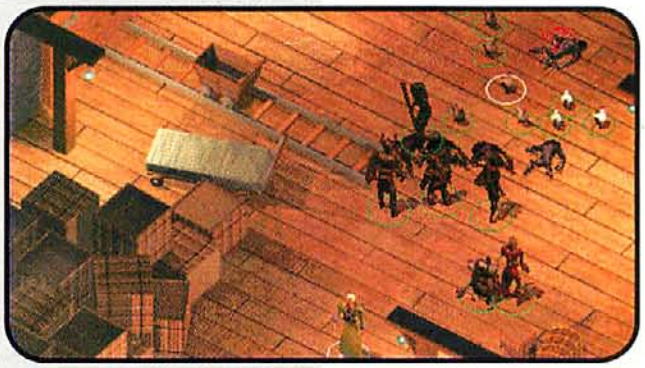
Just bring up the chat window by pressing **Enter**, type the code, and press **Enter** again to activate.

king arthur Changes birds into dragons (999 hit points)
grantlinkspence Turns animals into Animal Kings
pow Gives you a new unit called BabyPrez, a baby on a tricycle with a blunderbuss (500 HP, 50 strength, 10 armor, 15 range)
convert this! Gives you Saint Francis, a superpriest unit (25 HP, 200 strength, 0 armor, 10 range)
stormbilly Gives you Zug 209, a mech (100 HP, 20 strength, 10 armor, 15 range)
photon man Gives a space-age marine
jackbenimble Uses villagers as ammo for catapults

BALDUR'S GATE

Open the Baldur.ini file in your BALDUR'S GATE directory and add the line **Cheats=1** under the "Game Options" entry. Then save the file and run the game. Once you are in the game, hit **Ctrl-Tab** to bring up the console in which you type the cheats. **Ctrl-Tab** will also close this console. Type the cheats exactly as they appear below and hit **Enter** to activate.

Cheats:TheGreatGonzo() Summons 10 psycho chickens who defend you
Cheats:FirstAid() Gives you 5 healing potions, 5 neutralize poison potions, and 1 stone-to-flesh scroll
Cheats:Midas() Gives you 500 gold
Cheats:CowKill() Creates a CowKill spell if cows are nearby
Cheats:DrizztAttacks() Creates a hostile Drizzt



ALPHA CENTAURI TIPS

• Ever wonder about the black outline around a resource in the base display? It's a signal that you haven't discovered the requisite technology to maximize that resource. The technologies are: *Gene Splicing* to maximize Nutrients; *Economic Engineering* to maximize Minerals; and *Environmental Economics* to maximize Energy
• If you aren't getting the full benefit of sea improvements, just raise the sea level in that square.
• Though it's easy to miss, you can build aircraft carriers in ALPHA CENTAURI. Flight decks aren't a module but an ability, like deep radar. Once you have the required tech, put a transport module on a ship and click on Abilities. You can even make submersible aircraft carriers if you like.
• You can't build a borehole next to one that already exists. But you can build *all* the boreholes you want next to each other *if* you start them at the same time.
• If you select a unit and it hasn't moved this turn, you can hit Ctrl-U to upgrade. This is the only way to upgrade any designs with *Unity* in the name.
• Go to the design screen and find a unit you want to upgrade. Click on it to put that unit in the main window. Click on Upgrade. You'll be presented with a choice of units to upgrade to. Choose one and click OK. This will upgrade

AGE OF EMPIRES: RISE OF ROME AGE OF EMPIRES ALPHA CENTAURI BALDUR'S GATE BATTLEZONE BLOOD 2: THE CHOSEN CAESAR III CARMAGEDDON 2 CARNIVORES CIVILIZATION: CALL TO POWER COMMANDOS: BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY FIFA 99 FIGHTER SQUADRON: SCREAMIN' DEMONS OVER EUROPE FORSAKEN G-POLICE HALF LIFE HERETIC 2 INCOMING INDEPENDENCE WAR JANE'S WWII FIGHTERS KING'S QUEST: MASK OF ETERNITY MICROSOFT COMBAT FLIGHT SIM MYTH II: SOULBLIGHTER NEED FOR SPEED III NHL '99 POPULOUS QUAKE II REDGUARD RAILROAD TYCOON 2 RAINBOW 6 STAR WARS: ROGUE SQUADRON SHOGO SIMCITY 3000 SIN SPECOPS: RANGER TEAM BRAVO STARCRAFT: BROOD WAR THIEF: THE DARK PROJECT TRESPASSER TOMB RAIDER III TUROK 2 UNREAL VIPER RACING X-COM INTERCEPTOR

Cheats:DrizztDefends() Creates a friendly Drizzt
Cheats:CriticalItems() Gives you all important items
Cheats:Hans() Moves your party to a free adjacent area
Cheats:ExploreArea() Marks entire area explored

BATTLEZONE

Hold down the **Shift** and **Ctrl** keys and type in one of the following:
bzbody Unlimited shields
bzfree Unlimited pilots and resources
bzradar Full map
bztnt Unlimited ammo

BLOOD 2: THE CHOSEN

To enter these cheats, just type them in the chat window (press **T**, then type the cheat, then hit **Enter**).
Mpgod God mode
mpkfa Gives you a variety of weapons
mpbeansofcoolness Gives another variety of weapons
mpammo Gives you full ammo
mpclip No clip mode
mphealthy Gives you full health
mpwhereami Shows your coordinates
mphideme Hides your coordinates
mpbeefcake Makes your weapons more powerful
mpkillemall Kills all the bad guys on the level
mpspeedup Increases your speed
mpstronger Increases your strength
mpcaleb Changes your character model to Caleb

CIVILIZATION: CALL TO POWER

CHEATS

The following cheats are accessible from the interface:
A. On the Command Line bar, there is a button called Cheat.
B. To access the button, hit the tilde (~) key, then the space bar. Click the Cheat button.
C. Cheats can be used with fog-of-war on, but they are more easily used with fog toggled off.
D. The main map and game are disabled while cheat mode is on. To resume playing, close the Cheat tools.
E. Cheats will destablize network multiplayer games.

• To activate the City cheat, click on the City button. Select a city. To change the name of the selected city, click on the text box with the city name displayed. Edit the text so that the name reads as you would like it. Hit the Enter key when you are finished editing.

• To change the population of the selected city, click on the text box with the population displayed. Edit the text so that the number is the population size you would like. Hit Enter when you are finished editing.

Advances Cheat

Click on the Advances button. Select the player to whom you would like to give advances; player 2 is the Human player; players 1, 3, and so forth are AI players.
• From the "All Advancements" list, highlight the advance or advances you would like to give to the selected player, then click the < [less than] button.
• To take advances away from a player, highlight the advance or advances from the list of "Current Advancements," then just click on the > [more than] button.
(Note that the arrows aren't aligned correctly, so click the upper-left corner on the > key, and the upper-right corner on the < key.)



every unit of one type to another whether they've moved or not. You have to have a design the program considers superior before this will work.
• When recruiting mind worms it pays to be outside your borders. Any units that are found/captured beyond the colored border of your faction are independent and don't need support from any city.
• If you're tired of fighting indigenous life-forms, activate the Scenario Editor (under Scenario on the menu window). Go to Scenario Rules and click on the top box to turn off the planet. Save the game as a scenario. Deactivate the Scenario Editor. Then start a new scenario, making sure to load the scenario you just created.
• Once you have a selection of base facilities it can be tedious to take over or start a new base. To minimize tedium, find (or make) a production queue that you like (including the item currently being produced) and right-click on the queue area. Choose Save, then pick a slot and give it a name. Next time you take or build a base, right-click on the production queue and load the file you created. Close the production screen and close the base screen. Admire your work.
• There are more choices on the base governor's list then are readily apparent. If you click on the down-arrows on either side of the governor button, you get a list that lets you tailor the governor settings to your liking.

CHEATS

After starting a game, press Ctrl-K to access the Map Editor and Scenario Commands:

Y	Reveal map
Shift-F1	Create unit
Shift-F2	Technological discovery
Shift-F3	Switch sides/set view
Shift-F4	Change/set energy credits
Shift-F5	Change year
Shift-F6	Kill opponent
Shift-F7	View replay
Shift-F8	View movies
Shift-F9	Edit faction diplomacy

HALF-LIFE

CHEATS

To gain access to the cheats in HALF-LIFE, the first thing you have to do is activate the console. First, create a shortcut to the game, if you haven't already. Right-click on it and select properties. In the shortcut properties you can modify the shortcut's target. It should look like C:\sierra\half life\hl.exe depending on where you installed it, of course. Just add -console to the end. So the example would then look like: C:\sierra\half life\hl.exe -console (The space after the .exe is important). Now when you start a game from this shortcut, you can press the tilde (~) key to access the console. For some of the cheats to work, it is first necessary to type /sv_cheats 1 to activate cheat mode. To turn off the first three cheats listed, simply retype them. To deactivate all other cheats, you must quit and restart the game.

/god God mode
/noclip Fly, no clipping
/notarget Makes you invisible to enemies

/give X (where X is from the following list) Gives the corresponding item (For example /give weapon_crossbow gives you the crossbow. Don't forget the space and the underscore.)

item_healthkit
item_longjump
item_suit
weapon_357
weapon_9mmAR
weapon_crossbow
weapon_crowbar
weapon_egon
weapon_gauss
weapon_handgrenade
weapon_hornetgun
weapon_rpg
weapon_satchel
weapon_shotgun
weapon_snark
weapon_tripmine
ammo_357
ammo_9mmAR
ammo_ARgrenades
ammo_buckshot
ammo_crossbow
ammo_egonclip
ammo_gaussclip
ammo_rpgclip





mpophelia Changes your character model to Ophelia
mpishmael Changes your character model to Ishmael
mpgabby Changes your character model to Gabriella
mpberetta Gives you the Beretta; type twice for John Woo-style
mpsubmachinegun Gives you the submachine gun; type twice for two
mpflaregun Gives you the flare gun; type twice for two
mpshotgun Gives you the sawed-off shotgun; type twice for two
mpsniperrifle Gives you the sniper rifle
mphowitzer Gives you the howitzer
mpnapalmcannon Gives you the napalm cannon
mpsingularity Gives you the singularity generator
mpminigun Gives you the minigun
mpassaultrifle Gives you the assault rifle
mpbugbuster Gives you the Bugbuster
mplaserrifle Gives you the Cobalco laser rifle
mpteslacannon Gives you the Tesla cannon
mpvoodoo Gives you the voodoo doll
mptheorb Gives you the orb
mpgoshopping Gives all items
mpnicenurse Adds 25 to your health
mpreallynicenurse Adds 300 to your health
mpward Gives ward that adds 25 to your armor
mpnewcroward Gives newcroward that adds 100 to your armor
mpcarbonfiber Gives willpower power-up
mptakeoffshoes Makes you invisible
mpherkermur Gives triple damage

CAESAR III

Right-click on a water well, type **Alt-K**, followed by:

Alt-V Instant victory
Alt-C More cash (if you have less than 5000Dn)

When you can go into the Senate the following procedure can get you some serious cash: Click the Emperor icon in the Senate. Give yourself a wage of 500 denarii. When you accumulate about 3000, go back to the Senate and press the **Give to City** button. Click the **All** button in the dialog. Then press the **Give** button. Press the **Give to City** button again. Do *not* press the **All** button again or you will have problems! Give the same amount as before. Press the **Give** button again, and your account will go into the negative. Now you have unlimited credit! Repeat as necessary.

CARMAGEDDON 2

TILTY Pinball mode
WATERSPORT Drive underwater
LEMMINGIZE Stupid pedestrians
STIFFSPASMS Mutant corpses
WOTATWATAMI Slippery tires
SMARTBASTARD Skip race
MRMAINWARING Pedestrians freak out
BIGDANGLE Mutant tail thing
WETWET Credit bonus
TINGTING Free repairs
STOPSNATCH Toggles the timer on and off
MOONINGMINNIE Decreases the force of gravity
CLINTONCO Hot rod
FASTBAST Turbo peds
STICKYTYRES Wall climber
GOODHEAD Pedestrians get weird heads
EVENINGOCCIFER D.U.I.
TIMMYTITTY Gives you a time bonus
ZAZAZ Pedestrian annihilator
POWPOW Opponent repulsificator
FRYFRY Gives pedestrian flamethrower

CARNIVORES

Type **debugon** while playing to enable debug mode (your binoculars will come on while you type, but don't worry). In this mode dinosaurs will ignore your presence until you shoot. Plus, you'll have unlimited ammo, and lava does not

TO CHANGE THE GRAVITY:

/sv_gravity 150 800 is the default, if you set it to around 150 it's like walking on the moon.

TO CHANGE CAMERA MODE OR MOTION:

/thirdperson Switches you to third-person mode
/firstperson Switches you back to normal
/+cammousemove Mouse moves the camera in third-person mode
/-cammousemove Turns camera control back to normal
/chase_active 1 Activates chase mode in third person



CHEATS

kill you. In debug mode, you can also use the following cheats:
Ctrl Makes you run *really* fast
Shift-S Switches on/off slow mode
Shift-T Switches on/off timer indicating polygons per frame and time used to render this frame (in milliseconds)

COMMANDOS: BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY

These codes are for the English version only:
Type **GONZO1982** during the game. Then you can activate the following cheats:
Shift-V Invisible to enemy
Shift-X Teletransport (use the mouse to place your commando)
Ctrl-I Invincibility
Ctrl-Shift-N Finish the mission

FIFA 99

- To get the Winter introduction, type **win** repeatedly while game is loading.
- If you are close to goal and there are no teammates to pass to, you can tap the pass button to side-foot a shot into the corner of the net.
- If you are close to goal and there are no teammates to pass to, you can tap the lob button to attempt a chip shot.
- You can fake out defenders who are waiting for you to chest a ball by holding either skill mode key while the ball is in the air. At the last second your player will duck out of the way and let the ball go by.
- You can pull off some spectacular volley moves by double tapping the shoot button. Volleys are more likely to score but require more time and space.
- If you face your player away from the net and double tap the shoot button, he will attempt a bicycle kick.
- To execute a 360-degree spin move, just hold down a skill move button and press shoot (or just double tap a skill move button). This leaves you wide-open for a vicious slide tackle, so be careful.
- As a last resort against players who have an obvious chance on net, press **L1** and your player will foul the opponent, often in a spectacular fashion.

FIGHTER SQUADRON: SCREAMIN' DEMONS OVER EUROPE

Go into the sdemons.ini file and make the following change: **ShockRadio=1** This enables the few cheats that are available. Once this cheat is enabled, enter the sim and open up a chat line (with ~) and then type the following:
FS_LookAtTheSillyMonkey Blows up everyone's plane but yours
FS_HaveACow Drops a cow out of everyone's plane
FS_Decompose Causes everyone else's planes to break apart
(Note that the above cheats will not work in single or multiplayer games unless you have already entered the **ShockRadio=1** cheat.)
Other .ini file changes:
EnableCalibrate=1 Will turn on the calibrate button in the Options screen.
DisplayCoords=1 Will display your current FS coordinates in the overlay map (in the upper-right-hand corner of the screen). This will aid you in object placement when building missions or new terrain.
PutSlewBehindVehicle=1 Will cause you to be placed behind the vehicle you just left by hitting **S**.
TextureCacheLimit=x Where **x** is a number (in bytes) for the maximum size of the on-disk texture cache (.tex file). If cache grows greater than this number, it will be cleared. The default is 500MB.
TextureCacheSize=x Where **x** is a number (in bytes) for the maximum size of the in-memory texture cache. The default value is 10MB. Setting this cache to a higher number may improve game performance on machines that have memory to spare.
NetMaxPlayers=x Where **x** is the maximum number of players allowed in a network game (only the server machine needs to have this set). This number may not be greater than 28 and has only been thoroughly tested with 8 players.

FORSAKEN

Type the following codes at any menu. To turn them off, just type them again.
BUBBLES Turns on cheat mode
IAMZEUS God mode
FULLMONTY Level select
LUMBERJACK Missile toggle
JIMBEAM Laser beam toggle

G-POLICE

Enter these cheats at the main menu.
STATTOE In-game info
WOOWOO Havoc sirens
SUPACAM Switches to enemy cam, when you shoot them down
BENIHILL Benny Hill cars
PANTALON All secret missions (in Training Menu)
DOOBIES Gives you infinite shields
MRTICKY Gives you infinite weapons
(Note: You won't be able to progress past the current mission when these last two codes are enabled.)
Here are the passwords for every level.

DOLMAN	Level 2
SONAGAV	Level 3
ACEDUF	Level 4
JOJOGUN	Level 5
WENSKI	Level 6

/chase_active 0 Deactivates chase mode

REALISTIC GUNNERY:

You can only take so many bullets in real life. To make combat with the marines more interesting, you can make the mp5 more powerful. You can set the numbers for whatever you want, but I tested the following, and it is pretty realistic and balanced. The first three are for you, the player; the second three are for the marines:

/sk_plr_9mmAR_bullet1 : 20
/sk_plr_9mmAR_bullet2 : 20
/sk_plr_9mmAR_bullet3 : 20
/sk_ 9mmAR_bullet1 : 30
/sk_ 9mmAR_bullet2 : 30
/sk_ 9mmAR_bullet3 : 30

In case you're curious, you can modify all the weapons in a similar fashion. There are too many variables to print here, so look for a complete rundown in a future CGTips.

HERETIC 2

To activate cheats, first access the console by pressing the tilde (~) key then type in the codes as written.

playbetter	Toggles god mode
twoweeks	Toggles power-ups
meatwagon	Kill all mosters (except for the boss)
victor	Kill all monsters (including boss)
angermonsters	All monsters get angry
crazymonsters	All monsters go crazy
kiwi	No-clip mode
showcoords	Shows coordinates
weapprev	Go to previous weapon
weapnext	Go to next weapon



suckitdown chicken Turns you into a chicken

suckitdown all	Gives you all (useful) items
suckitdown health	Gives you maximum health
suckitdown mana	Gives you maximum offensive and defensive mana
suckitdown armor	Gives you silver armor; type again to get gold armor
suckitdown powerup	Gives you a Tome of Power power-up

spawn item_weapon_hellstaff Gives you the Hellstaff weapon
To spawn the desired item just type in spawn X where X is from the following list:

item_weapon_firewall
item_weapon_maceballs
item_weapon_magicmissile
item_weapon_phoenixbow
item_weapon_redrain_bow
item_weapon_sphereofannihilation
item_defense_meteorbarrier
item_defense_polymorph
item_defense_powerup
item_defense_ringofrepulsion
item_defense_shield
item_defense_teleport
item_health_full
item_health_half
item_mana_combo_half
item_mana_combo_quarter
item_mana_defensive_full
item_mana_defensive_half
item_mana_offensive_full
item_mana_offensive_half
item_puzzle_canyonkey
item_puzzle_cloudkey
item_puzzle_cog
item_puzzle_crystal
item_puzzle_dungeonkey
item_puzzle_high-priestesskey
item_puzzle_high-priestesssymbol
item_puzzle_hive2amulet
item_puzzle_hive2gem
item_puzzle_hive2spear
item_puzzle_minecartwheel
item_puzzle_ore
item_puzzle_plazacontainer
item_puzzle_potion
item_puzzle_refinedore
item_puzzle_shield
item_puzzle_slumcontainer
item_puzzle_tavernkey
item_puzzle_tome
item_puzzle_townkey

KING'S QUEST: MASK OF ETERNITY

Press Shift-Ctrl-7 to get access to the console. You can conveniently ignore the password prompt. After typing in the desired codes, hit Shift-Ctrl-7 again to return to the game.

noConCollide Turns off clipping mode

conCollide Turns clipping mode back on

setFirstPerson First-person mode

setThirdPerson Third-person mode

god/ungod Toggles god mode on and off (some things still can kill you but not many)



In case you have the urge to play naked.

teleport Lets you click on the world map and be transported to the desired spot

Give X (where X is from the following list):

Dagger, SmallAx, BroadSword, Mace, LakeSword, SkelKingSword, BattleAx, WarHammer, Pike, LongSword, FlameSword, TempleSword, SmCrossbow, AzrielHammer, SmCpndCBow, ShortBow, LongBow, CrossBow, CpndCrossbow, FlameBow, IceCrossbow, WeeperEyes, DemonRocks, SkelBow, SlmSlime, WitchBolt, Lava, Fists, Icycle, LeatherGloves, LeatherArmor, LeatherBoots, ChainMailShirt, ChainMailGloves, ChainMailSuit, PlateMail, BronzePlate, FullArmor, Helmet, TempleArmor, GodArmor, Mushroom, SacredWater, Crystal, ElixerOfLife, Clarity, Invisible, Invulnerable, Strength, RingOfDeadHero, Ashes, Candle, SilverCoins, MagicMap, RopeAndHook, RingOfLight, KeyToDeathMaze, Mold, BrokenShield, RustedBrokenShield, HearingHorn, AntiPoisonFlower, GreenMushroomPiece, Rock, IronLock, OakRoot, LodeStone, CrystalPyramid, BlackDiamond, AmberGlow, BasiliskTongue, FireGem, PipeCap1, PipeCap2, DragonKey, RockKey, BlueAdamant, JailKey, DecipheringAmulet, Paddle, Feather, GoodSkull, BadSkull, RoundKey, SquareKey, Ladle, hmhand, Mask1, Mask2, Mask3, Mask4, Mask5, Piece1, Piece2, Piece3, Piece4, Scroll, LadyBell, RustedLock, KeepKey, StoneOrder, MetalShaft, TruthKey, LightKey, OrderKey, MarbleTablet0, MaskMedalian, Grail, Mask3B, Piece5, UniHorn, SpellPage, Mask1A, Piece1A, DarkPyramid, ShardFuse, MarbleTablet1, MarbleTablet2, MarbleTablet3, GriffRoomKey, GriffCageKey, ClockShaft, HookDown, HookUp, SpinningMask, Orcbow, Spear, IceShard, IceLever, LucretoFire, NoRanged, NoArmor, BirthdaySuit, Logo1, Logo2

MYTH II: SOULBLIGHTER

If you hold down the **Shift** key while selecting "New Game" at the main menu, you will gain access to all the non-secret missions.

Hidden Griffin

Bungie had been working on a griffin unit, but bagged the idea. There is one lonely griffin left however, and he lives in a tree on Level 19 (Relic). Just find the shard in the northeast, and just at the edge of the map there is a big tree on the hill. Rotate your camera so that it points south and **Zoom** in until your camera is in the tree trunk, and you'll see the griffin. (Too bad you can't control him.)



Long-Awaited Drinking Party

To access this hilarious secret level, start a game on the third level. The mission calls for you to escort a peasant into a friendly



SAEGGY	Level 7
MAZMAN	Level 8
DAZMAN	Level 9
DELUCS	Level 10
ANDOOOO	Level 11
KIMBCHS	Level 12
ANDYMAC	Level 13
YERMAN	Level 14
OLLIEB	Level 15
THEYOLK	Level 16
TONYMASH	Level 17
ANDYCROW	Level 18
BIONIC	Level 19
TSLATER	Level 20
IAINTHOD	Level 21
JONRITZ	Level 22
CLAIREC	Level 23
STEVEBOT	Level 24
ANGUSF	Level 25
EUANLAC	Level 26
EDFIRE	Level 27
STUBOMB	Level 28
THONBOY	Level 29
JIMMAC	Level 30
PUGGER	Level 31
ROSSCO	Level 32
CAKEBOY	Level 33
NIKNAK	Level 34
SAGLORD	Level 35

INCOMING

Just hit the following function keys to get these cheats:

F2 Makes hitting targets easier
F3 Makes player invulnerable
F4 Gives infinite lives
F5 Gives infinite weapons
F6 Gives a smart bomb
F7 Quit
F8 Quick save
F9 Reloads quick save
F10 Shows the frame rate (hit again to turn off)
F11 Restart the level

INDEPENDENCE WAR

Type in **darkgoat** during flight to activate cheats.

Left Shift-k Allows you to dock with any vessel
Left Shift-0 (zero) Kill targeted ship
Left Shift-s Force next scripted event
Left Shift-; Freeze target
Left Shift-i Makes you invulnerable
Left Shift-j Jump to lagrange point
Left Shift-8 Jump to target
Left Shift-9 Match the velocity of a targeted ship
Left Shift-a Gives you superspeed
Left Shift-backspace View the most recent movie
Left Shift-w Win the mission

JANE'S WWII FIGHTERS

(A *CGW* Exclusive Cheat)

In Quick Mission mode, if you shoot down seven enemy fighters yourself, without using a wingman and with both triple ammo and invulnerability turned off, there is a 20 percent chance that a UFO will be created.

MICROSOFT COMBAT FLIGHT SIM

Flying Pig

Open a game at coordinates **N51°10.86' W1° 50.42'**. Fly around and look for the cloud. Directly under the cloud at about 2,000 feet is a large pink pig, hovering in midair.

Secret Mission

Look in the mission directory for a file called **team.mi_**. Rename it to **Team.mis**. Once you've done this, an interesting new mission called "Combat Flight Sim Team Outing" will appear in the single missions list.

CHEATS



village. Before you reach the town, send some troops north, along the path (on the west side of the farm). When you get to the river, you will see some tiny islands. On one of the islands sit three frogs. Kill the frogs and then proceed with the mission as planned. When you proceed to the next mission, you will be treated to some shots of the Bungie team in the intro, and then get to take some poachers with blunderbusses out for a hunting trip.

Limbs, Heads, and Smoking Crater

This level is truly spectacular, especially if fireworks are what you are looking for. The level teems with Whights and huge piles of satchel charges. To get to it, you have to finish *The Murder of Crows* level. At the end of that level, The Deceiver walks down a path to the exit. Normally you would follow him, but this time, turn around and go north, clear across the level, to the alternate exit. Then you will proceed to the secret level.



Need for Speed III

Type the following codes at any menu to activate the cheat:

RUSHHOUR Increases NPC traffic
EMPIRE Opens up Empire City track
ELNINOR Gives you the secret El Niño car
MERC Gives you the Mercedes CLKGTR
GOFAST Allows you to dive super-fast in single-race mode
ALLCARS Gives access to all cars

Type any of the following codes right before you click the **Race** button in order to drive these secret cars:

G001 Mazda Miata
G002 Toyota Landcruiser
G003 Cargo truck
G004 BMW 5 series
G005 '71 Plymouth Barracuda
G006 Ford pickup with camper shell
G007 Jeep Cherokee
G008 Ford full-size van
G009 '64-'65 Mustang
G010 '66 Chevy pickup
G011 Range Rover
G012 School bus
G013 Caprice Classic taxi
G014 Chevy cargo van
G015 Volvo station wagon
G016 Sedan
G017 Crown Victoria police car
G018 Mitsubishi Eclipse police car
G019 Grand Am police car
G020 Range Rover police car/ranger vehicle
G021 Cargo truck (same as 03)

NHL 99

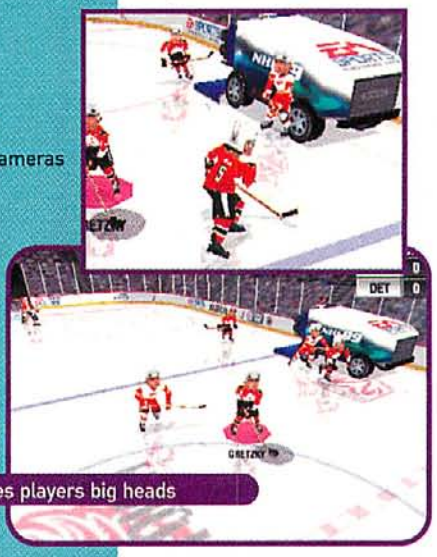
Create a player and type one of the following names. You'll see the message: "Player is already in the database," and you should click the check mark. The new player will have full stats.
Dave Warfield, Funky Swadling, Cory Yip, Bryce Cochrane, John Rix, Jeff Dyck, Trent Shumay, Jeff Mair, Paul Martin, Andy Harris, Chris Deas, Lance Wall, Mark Lesser, Hong Chin, Trent Shumay, Bruce McMillan

Type these codes anytime during the game:

mantis Gives all players long arms, legs, and necks
nhlkids Makes players small
homegoal Adds a point to home team's score
awaygoal Adds a point to away team's score
penalty Causes a penalty
injury Causes an injury
zambo Causes the zamboni to appear on the ice
victory Starts a fireworks show
flash All the spectators start using their flash cameras
spots Activates pregame spotlights
check Automatic body checks
grab Automatic stick holds

Exit the game and, while in the Credits, select Programing and type any cheat from the following list:

warp9 Makes game speed faster
Eaonline Enables Internet play
buffed Makes giant players
1999 Plays the Stanley Cup video
quicker Boosts all players' stats
gulliver Makes huge goalies
nobody No crowd
crankit Unlocks all resolution options for D3D
headbone Gives players big heads



Populous

Press **Tab** and **F11** at the same time, then type **byrne** and press **Enter** at the window that appears to enable cheat mode. Now, type one of the following codes at anytime during the game:

Tab-F3 Spells
Tab-F4 Buildings
Tab-F5 Mana

Quake II

To activate these cheats, press the tilde (~) key and enter the following codes in the console window:

god God mode
notarget No target mode
noclip No clipping
give all All items, weapons, 999 ammo
give jacket armor Jacket armor
give shotgun Shotgun
give super shotgun Super shotgun

Redguard

To activate the cheats you first must hit **F12** to access the console and then type the following: **Item add,X** (where **X** is from the following list)

2 Gold
3 Stoneskin potion
4 Health potion
5 Ring of invisibility
6 Vola's ring
7 Sabre
8 Rusty key
9 Gold key
10 Silver key
11 Amulet
12 Soul gem
13 Soul sword
14 Crowbar
15 Peg rune
16 Peg rune 2
17 Peg rune 3
19 Orc's blood
20 Orc's blood +
21 Spider's milk
22 Spider's milk +
23 Ectoplasm
24 Ectoplasm +
25 Hist sap
26 Hist sap +
27 Dwarven lore book
28 Dwarven gear
29 Glass vial
30 Glass vial filled with elixer
31 Iron weight
32 Bucket
33 Bucket full of water
34 Gauntlet rune
35 Elven artifact book
37 Redguard heroes book
38 Hammerfell book on Flora
39 Map from Makio
40 Leather pouch of gold
41 Crendel's stolen map
42 Silver boat
43 Shovel
44 Aloe
45 Torch
46 Monocle eyepiece
47 Flag
48 Silver locket
49 League insignia parchment
50 Joto's jail map
51 Flask of Lillandril
52 Hundings talisman
53 Izsara's journal
54 Feather
55 Kithral's journal. The dead monk
56 Folks firmament book
57 Izara's locked journal
58 Star stone
59 Key to warehouse
60 Key to Izara's house
61 Spell
64 Glass bottle empty
65 Glass bottle with water
66 Glass bottle mixed with water and aloe
67 Strength potion
68 Bandage
69 Bandage with blood
70 Sabre
71 Sabre
72 Sabre
73 Sabre
74 Bone key

give machinegun Machine gun
give grenade launcher Grenade launcher
give rocket launcher Rocket launcher
give shells Shells
give bullets Bullets
give cells Cells
give grenades Grenades
give rockets Rockets
give slugs Slugs
give quad damage Quad damage
give invulnerability Invulnerability
give silencer Silencer
give rebreather Rebreather
give health 100 health
give weapons All weapons
give ammo All ammo
give armor Body armor

SIN

First press the tilde (~) key, as in other QUAKE-engine games, then enter the code:

CHEATS

/health 999	Health 999
/wuss	All weapons
/superfuzz	God mode
/nocollision	No clip mode
/wallflower	No target

To get items, type /spawn x where x is any of the following:

magnum	Gives the magnum
shotgun	Gives the shotgun
assaultrifle	Gives the assault rifle
rocketlauncher	Gives the rocket launcher
sniperrifle	Gives the sniper rifle
heligun	Gives the big gun from the chopper
reactiveshields	Gives the reactive shield
rockets	Gives rockets
coin	Gives a coin
health	Gives a health pack
cookies	Gives a pack of cookies
lensflare	Makes a light-effect
ChainGun	Chaingun (the one you get with the 5-key)
BlueCard	Blue identcard
OrangeCard	Orange identcard
YellowCard	Yellow identcard
GreenCard	Green identcard
KeyRing	Small key
MoneyBag	Bag from bank robbery
Dollar	Gives a coin
Evidence	Papers with evidence
PulsePart1	First part of pulse cannon
PulsePart2	Second part of pulse cannon
PulsePart3	Third part of pulse cannon
Chemsuit	Chemical protection suit
Blueprints	Blueprints from construction site
U4 sample	Sample from chemplant
Silencer	Silencer for standard gun

SIMCITY 3000

To activate any of the cheats, first press the Ctrl-Shift-Alt-C keys all at the same time. Then type in one of the following cheats in the window.

I am weak	Makes buildings, utilities, zoning, transportation, planting trees, and creating surface water free
call cousin Vinnie	Go to the Meet window to the Local Fundraising Event. Once there, Vinnie will offer you some cash
Zyxwvu	Use the call cousin Vinnie cheat and refuse his offer. Then use the zyxwvu cheat and the beautiful SIMCITY Castle will appear in your Rewards menu. The castle boosts land value, aura, and does some other good stuff
garbage in, garbage out	Makes all garbage buildings available
power to the masses	Makes all power buildings available
water in the desert	Makes all water buildings available
Salt on	Changes the sea to salt water
Salt off	Changes the sea to fresh water
Terrain one up	Raises the terrain
Terrain one down	Lowers the terrain
Terrain ten up	Raises the terrain
Terrain ten down	Lowers the terrain
pay tribute to your king	All rewards become available
I love red tape	All ordinances become available
let's make a deal	Neighbor and business deals offered
nerdz rool	Gives you high-tech industry



Level Skip Cheat
Go to the console by pressing the tilde (~) key, then type **map x** (where **x** is the level name–for instance, **map boss2**) For a list of level names, go to Multiplay/Host Game from the main menu.

RAILROAD TYCOON 2

To activate cheats, first press **Tab** to bring up your cursor and then type in one of the following:

BigfootGold Win with gold victory
BigfootSilver Win with silver victory
BigfootBronze Win with bronze victory
BoBo Lose scenario
King of the hill Gives your character $100,000
Powerball Gives company $100 million
Slush fund Gives company $1 million
Let me in Gives access to all denied territories
Speed Racer Doubles maximum train speeds
AMD103 Converts all engines to AMD-103s at expense of profits
Show me the trains Gives all engines
Viagra Increases city sizes

RAINBOW 6

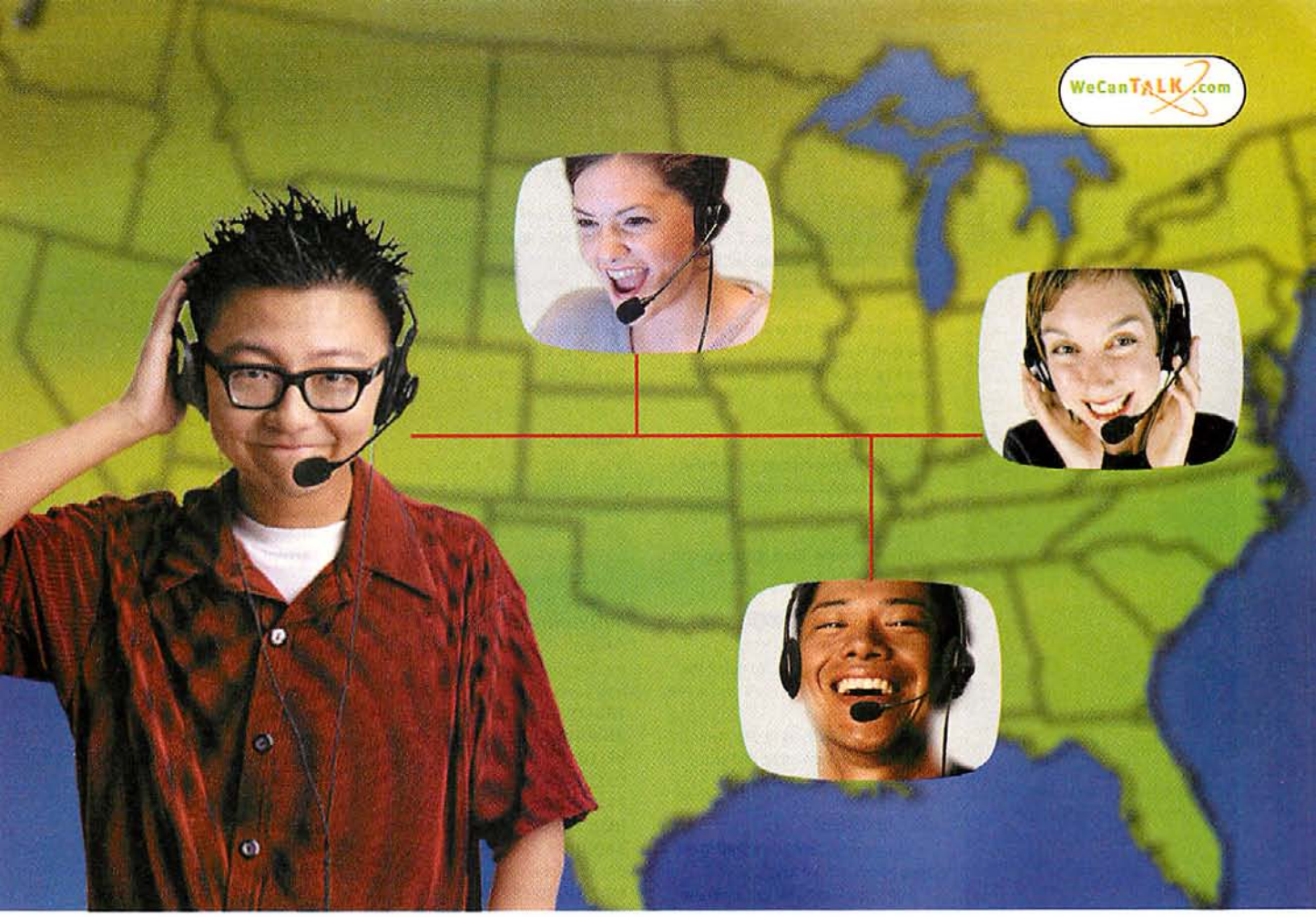
To activate cheats, press ' in the game and then type in one of the following:

TEAMGOD Team god mode
AVATARGOD Player god mode
STUMPY Stumpy mode on
CLODHOPPER Enlarges player's feet and hands
MEGANOGGIN Mega head mode
BIGNOGGIN Big head mode
5FINGERDISCOUNT Gives full ammo
NOBRAINER Turns AI off
DEBUGKEYS Debug keys enabled
TURNPUNCHKICK Changes players from 3D to 2D
1-900 Heavy breathing
EXPLORE Toggles the victory conditions on/off

STAR WARS: ROGUE SQUADRON

To enter the cheats, click on Settings from the console, then select General. There you will see a blank space labeled "Enter Passcode Here." Click on it, and press **Shift-Del** to disable the cheat.

CREDITS *Star Wars*-style credits
LEIAWRKOUT Activates force feedback for PC joysticks
GUNDARK Modifies force feedback control for PC joysticks
CHICKEN Allows you to play as an AT-ST
IAMDOLLY Gives you unlimited lives



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STARCRAFT: BROOD WARS

These cheats are identical to the codes for the original STARCRAFT. First hit the Enter key and type in the cheat, then press Enter again to activate it. The codes that affect gameplay conditions can be toggled by typing them a second time.

there is no cow level Win current mission
game over man Lose current mission
power overwhelming All friendly units and structures are invincible (can affect scripted scenes)
show me the money Adds 10,000 minerals and 10,000 gas
whats mine is mine Adds 10,000 minerals
breathe deep Adds 10,000 gas
something for nothing All upgrades can be researched instantly and free of charge
black sheep wall Turns off fog-of-war
operation cwal Increases unit and structure build times dramatically Instant research
staying alive Turns off victory conditions so the current mission will never end
medieval man All technology and special abilities can be researched instantly and free of charge
modify the phase variance Opens up the entire technology tree
food for thought Turns off supply requirements
the gathering Infinite energy for all friendly and enemy units
war aint what it used to be Disables fog-of-war
Noglues Prevents enemy units from using energy-based special abilities
radio free zerg Plays a hidden Zerg tune; available only when using the Zerg race

Ophelia Enables level skipping. For original STARCRAFT campaign mission, type terranY, zergY, or protossY where Y is the number of the mission. For BROOD WAR campaign missions, type xprotossY, xterranY, or xzergY, where Y is the number of the mission.

TOUGHGUY Gives you all power-ups in the game

SHOGO

To access the cheats, press **T** (or whatever you have the message button mapped to), type the code, and then hit **Enter**

mptears Gives you unlimited ammo
mpgod God mode
mpkfa Full ammo, armor, and health
mphealth Full health
mpammo Full ammo
mparmor Full armor
mpclip Toggles clipping mode on/off
mppos Toggles coordinates on/off
mpcamera Toggles camera mode on/off
mplightscape Turns lightscape edit mode on/off

SPEC OPS: RANGER TEAM BRAVO

• Move the savedata.txt file out of the specops directory, and you'll gain access to all missions.
• Hit **Alt-Shift-V**, go to your items list and select the Viewfinder, and your ranger will be invincible.

TRESPASSER

To change levels, hold **Ctrl-Shift-Q-W**, then release the **W** key.

If you're stuck with this game, here is how to activate some cheats that might ease the pain. Press **Ctrl-F11**. A cursor will appear in the lower left of the screen; then type in any of these codes. After typing the code, press **Enter** and hit **Ctrl-F11** again to activate.

TNEXT Transports you through important locations on the level
LOC Gives coordinates on the world map
BONES Highlights objects you can interact with
GORE 2 More gore
INVUL Invincibility
WOO Infinite ammo
BIONICWOMAN You can jump higher, but you run slower
WIN Shows ending FMV
DINOS Freezes dinos

TOMB RAIDER III

• To skip a level in the game: Draw the pistols; walk one step backward; walk one step forward; crouch and stand; spin around three times; then jump forward.
• To get all weapons: Draw the pistols; walk one step backward; walk one step forward; crouch and stand; spin around three times; then jump backward.
• To find a secret room: Go to the pool in Lara's mansion. Behind the diving board, there is a switch. Flip the switch to open a door in the main room of the mansion. Behind there is another switch. Pull that switch, turn around and run to the open door that's across the hall. Once in there, you'll find Lara's treasure room.

TUROK 2

Select "Enter Cheats" in the Options menu. An onscreen keypad appears on which you must type the names of the cheats you want available to you during the game. To turn a cheat on (or off), you must then go to Cheat Select Menu and select the particular cheat you want.

OBLIVIONISOUTTHERE Lets you activate any of the cheats (it's the *iliber* cheat, since it's equivalent to typing in the names of all cheats)
TROMPEM Big hands and feet mode
BIGBADNOODLE Big head mode
HELLOSTICKY Stick mode
LILLIPUTIAN Tiny mode
PICASSO Pen-and-ink mode
HENRYSBILERP Gouraud mode
YOQUIEROJUAN Shows Juan's face on every diamond
MRNOPRULEZ Do nothing
INEEDAUPS Blackout mode
WIZARDOFOZ Psychedelic textures
JANESSPECIALWORLD Same as Juan's but for Jane

UNREAL

Hit the tilde (~) key, which brings up a console, then type any of the following cheats:

Allammo	Full ammo
Fly	Fly mode on
Ghost	Fly mode plus no clipping
God	God mode
Walk	Normal mode
invisible1	Makes you invisible
invisible0	Toggles invisibility off
killall	Kills all enemies on level
Playersonly	Freezes all enemies
Suicide	You die
Summon X	Gives the desired weapon or item where **X** is the name of the item

Enter the following names to play the corresponding level:

vortex2	Vortex Rikers
nyleve	NyLeve's Falls
dig	Rrajigar Mine
dug	Depths of Rrajigar
passage	Sacred Passage
chizra	Chizra–Nali Water God Temple
ceremony	The Ceremonial Chambers
dark	Dark Arena
harobed	Harobed Village
terralift	Terraniux Underground
terraniux	Terraniux
noork	Noork's Elbow
ruins	Temple of Vandora
trench	The Trench
isvkran4	ISV-Kran Deck 4
isvkran32	ISV-Kran Decks 3 and 2
isvdeck1	ISV-Kran Deck 1
spirevillage	Spire Village
thesunspire	The Sunspire
skycaves	Gateway to Na Pali
skytown	Na Pali Haven
skybase	Outpost
veloraend	Velora Pass
bluff	Bluff Eversmoking
dasapass	Dasa Mountain Pass
dasacellars	Cellars at Dasa Pass
naliboat	Serpent Canyon
nalic	Nali Castle
nalilord	Demonlord's Lair
dcrater	Demoncrater
extremebeg	Mothership Basement
extremelab	Mothership Lab
extremecore	Mothership Core
extremegen	Skaarj Generator
extremedgen	Illumination
extremedark	The Darkening
extremeend	The Source Antechamber
queenend	The Source

VIPER RACING

Press **Shift-F12** to activate a blimp camera that flies around using DESCENT-style controls.

X-COM INTERCEPTOR

Press **Ctrl-W** when you hear a double beep tone, cheat mode is active.

Battlecheat To enable cheats
Canttouchthis Invincibility
Fillerup Unlimited flight range

BONUS

Here's a secret bonus cheat the folks at Fox interactive put in just for *CGW* readers.

While playing a game in Easy mode, activate the console by typing a tilde (~) and then type RIPLEY_WAS_HERE. for a special surprise!

ALIENS VS. PREDATOR

THIEF: THE DARK PROJECT

The following cheats work only with v1.33.
• Press Control-Alt-Shift-End to skip the current mission.
• Add the line cash_bonus to your dark.cfg. If set to an integer, its value is added to your loot total.
• Add the line starting_mission X in your dark.cfg, where X is the desired mission number. When you select New Game, you will start at that mission.

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* The richness and depth of game play is reflected in 40 military and civilian units and 100 technologies from over 300 years of history (1500s-1800s)

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* Intuitive interface and extensive game play tutorial makes it easy for first-time players to get up and running

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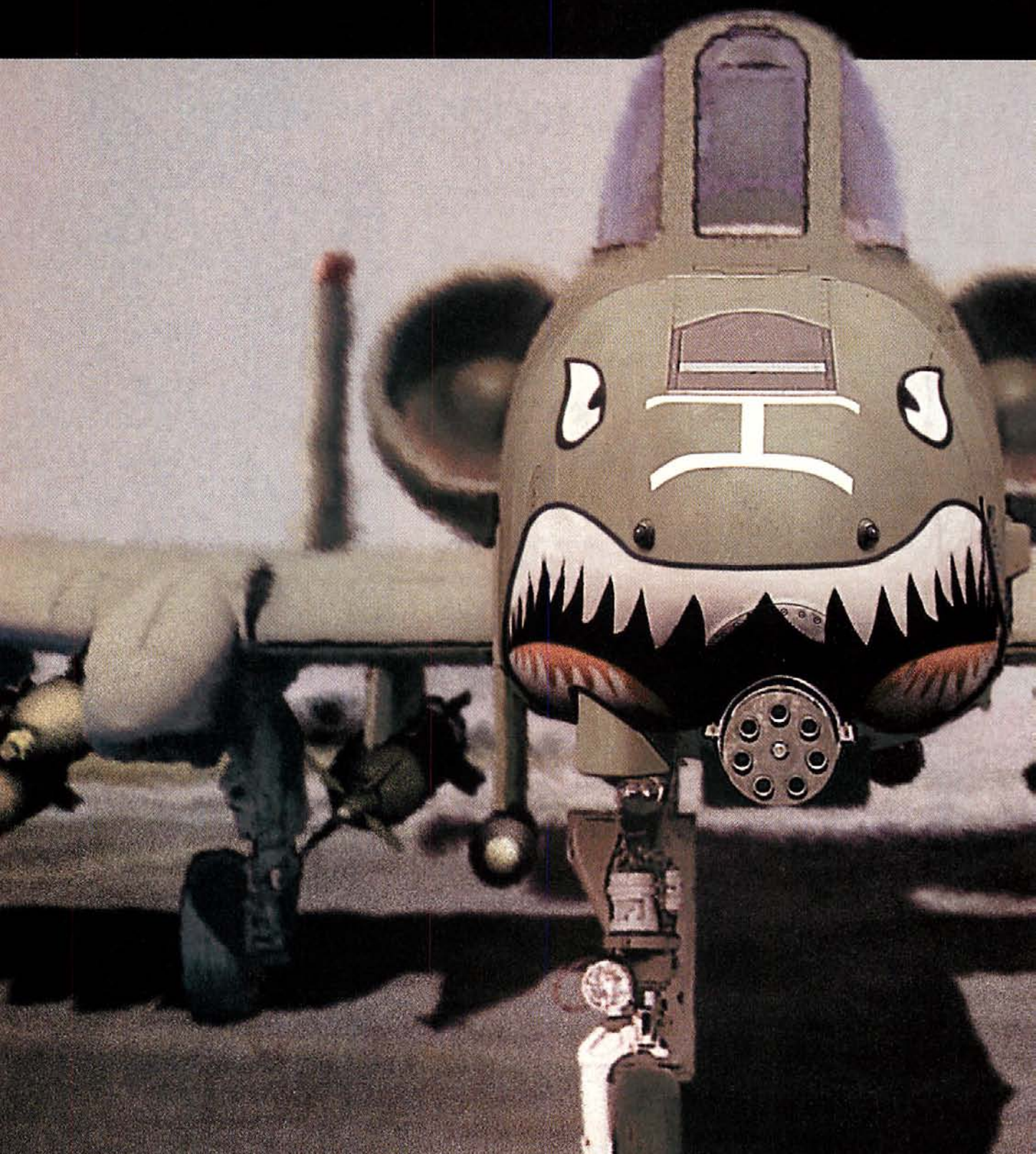
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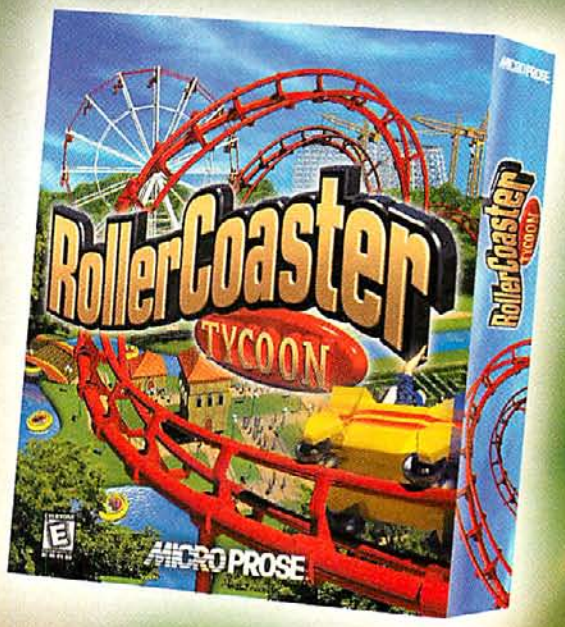
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G.O.D.'S WORK

...is done out of a church. But the Gathering of Developers aren't choirboys—considering that they have titles like MAX PAYNE, HEAVY METAL: F.A.K.K.^{2}, and KISS: PSYCHO CIRCUS in development. Who are they, and why do they think they're out to save gaming?

by Ken Brown





It's anything but business as usual for the Gathering of Developers. The brash new Dallas-based game publisher—otherwise known as G.O.D.—has shaken up the industry by shaping itself as a developer's collective. Their strategy: Fund good games by successful developers, pay higher royalties, and give game makers more credit and creative freedom. If the G.O.D. strategy pays off, it could result in healthier independent developers and better games. It may also serve as a hedge against the kind of publisher consolidation that has occurred in the console-game sector of the industry.

To fulfill their vision, G.O.D. cofounders Mike Wilson and Harry Miller set out to create the gaming industry's version of the film world's United Artists. UA was formed in 1919, when Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford got fed up with the way the big studios were exploiting people. They formed a company that rewarded their talent and put more of the decisions in the hands of those who understood movie making. With that in mind, Wilson and Miller formed a collective with eight developers, including 3D Realms, Ritual Entertainment, and Terminal Reality, all of which have a say in the titles G.O.D. publishes.

The strategy has been controversial. Early critics claimed that G.O.D. wouldn't have the marketing muscle to put enough of its titles on mass retailers' shelves. Others said putting the lunatics in charge of the asylum would lead to blown deadlines and kitchen-sink game design.

But the evidence is beginning to mount that G.O.D.'s plan is indeed working. In the 18 months since G.O.D.'s inception, it has helped develop 10 games, published JAZZ JACKRABBIT and RAILROAD TYCOON II (both of which sold well), and has a string of impressive titles lined up that include FLY!, MAX PAYNE, HEAVY METAL: F.A.K.K.^{2}, NOCTURNE, and others (covered in the following pages). G.O.D. also appears to have made an impact on the way publishers structure developer royalties, which have grown from the low teens to 20–30 percent.

That's not to say G.O.D. is taking over the world. Since the company is so lean, with a skeletal marketing and management crew, the Gathering can't fund more titles before shipping a top seller or raising outside capital. In addition, G.O.D. still hasn't attracted a top-tier, high-profile developer like id Software, Ensemble Studios, or Valve. Even 3D Realms, arguably the highest-profile member of the Gathering, hasn't committed wholeheartedly, allowing only certain titles to go out under the Gathering label (and DUKE NUKEM FOREVER isn't one of them).

WHAT'S G.O.D.'S PLAN?

So where is all of this leading? No matter how successful the Gathering is, it probably won't threaten the long-term hegemony of publishing powerhouses like EA and Microsoft. But Wilson believes it's important for someone to act as a counterweight to the big boys. He wants the Gathering to "keep the balance of power weighted in the direction of the creators rather than the financiers, before consolidation makes things really scary."

Of course, G.O.D. could become a big boy itself. It happened to United Artists and, more recently, to Electronic Arts, which was founded on some of the same ideals. G.O.D.'s founders have said that they expect to grow with the addition of other development companies, and they hope to take on more titles when they have the money. And what if they got an offer for $50 million to sell out?

"I'd take it," Wilson replied. "Then I'd buy one of my other partners out and get back in. It's still too much fun shaking things up in this ridiculous industry to walk away completely, and I don't know how anything could compare to the Gathering in that area."



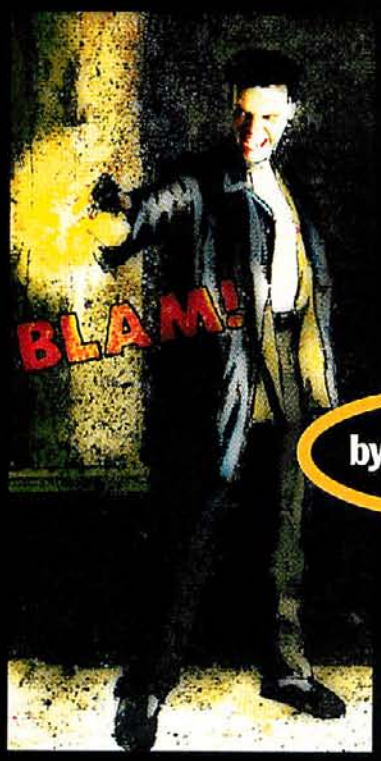
G.O.D. Cofounders Mike Wilson (above, left) and Harry Miller, and the disciples (inset) in their converted church offices.

PHOTOS BY: JOHN BELL

Max Payne

Taking Action to the Max

Prepare to Truly Feel the Payne



by Joe Vallina

Max Payne is in a world of hurt. As an undercover DEA operative in New York City, he's not in the easiest of professions. Three years ago his wife and child were brutally murdered by the New York Mafia, and he now finds himself undercover and up to his neck in the biggest organized crime family in the city. It seems that there is a new, deadly drug on the streets, Valkyr, and Max is getting close to the source. But just as he gets onto something big, his superior officer is killed and the murder is pinned on Max. This of course hits all of the local papers, blowing his cover in the mob. Quickly he finds himself being chased by the cops and the Mafia. Welcome to the world of Max Payne.

MAX PAYNE is being developed by Remedy Entertainment in Helsinki, Finland, under the watchful eye of the game's publisher, Gathering of Developers (G.O.D.). Remedy isn't very well known (the company's biggest hit to date was the driving title DEATH RALLY, a lackluster seller), but with G.O.D.'s help, the company hopes to hit the big time with MAX PAYNE.

In the Gritty Underworld

Max's trials will take place in areas ranging from down-and-dirty industrial settings all the way to palatial, upscale havens where the "real evil dwells," according to MAX PAYNE's Game Designer Sam Lake.

Some of the game's interiors sport amazing detail. The designers have created realistic environments that are unmatched by anything else we've seen. It's one thing to conjure up alien environments, but quite another to accurately and believably render the real world.

The game will use dynamic radiosity lighting to ensure that the environments are as believable as possible. Realism and beauty do have their price, of course. MAX PAYNE will be 3D-accelerated only (supporting Direct3D along with native support for many 3D cards); there will be no software rendering for the Luddites among us.

For that extra sense of realism, the Remedy team is sending a group of artists, armed with cameras, into the streets of New York City to gather scenes that will be incorporated into the game's environments. The designers intend to take the real world New York City scenes down a notch into the gritty underworld of film noir—and just when New York's image was starting to improve. Rudy Giuliani won't be pleased.

What a Character

But it's not just interiors and exteriors that show the designers ambition. Max and his adversaries are also rendered in great detail. The game's skeletal animation system wraps several layers of player "skins" around a simulated skeleton, resulting in characters whose clothing and motions are very realistic. Capes and coats flap in the wind, and roll-and-dive moves border on the cinematic.

The traditional downside to detail in computer games has been the unavoidable slowdown in frame-rates at higher detail levels. Remedy has solved this problem in MAX PAYNE by using what Project Lead Petri Järvilehto calls a "level of detail" system. This renders objects in the distance with relatively few pixels, and uses progressively more pixels as the object



MODEL THIS!!! MAX PAYNE's ballistics model is impressive. In this shot you can clearly see each individual pellet—and you'll feel them too.

Genre: Action • ETA: Q1 '00 • Developer: Remedy Entertainment

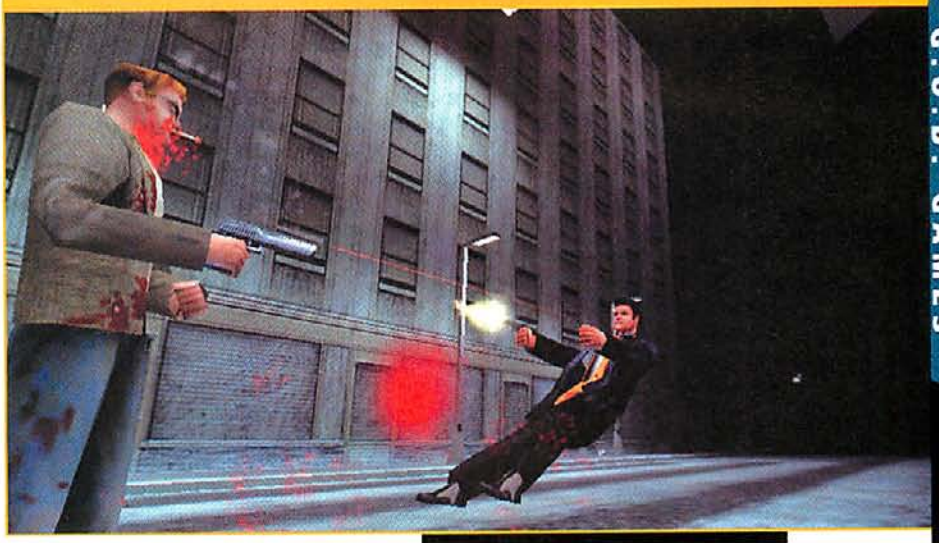
comes closer and fills a greater portion of the screen. In this way, the computer has to perform fewer of the complex calculations that slow down scene-rendering. Another trick the design team is using to maintain high frame-rates is something called "exit optimization." In this technique, the computer draws only what the player sees, instead of everything in a specific area, whether or not the player is aware of its presence. For example, if you're looking through a doorway, only the objects and portions of walls in your direct line-of-sight will be rendered.

Cinematic Action

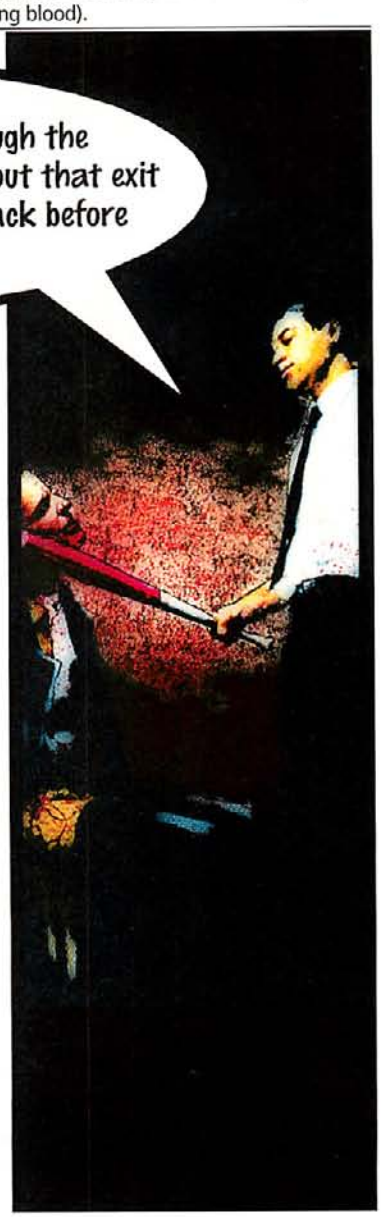
The Remedy guys are major movie buffs, and it shows in MAX PAYNE's design. Remedy hopes to let the gamer have a cinematic experience while playing the game, all the better to draw him into what Remedy promises will be a deep plot. That's why they decided to show Max in the third-person perspective. The designers felt that a first-person perspective just wasn't an option to fully show off all of the great moves Max has at his disposal.

If you've seen any John Woo movies, you already have a good idea of the kinds of moves Max is capable of performing in the game. From the standard crouch to the supercool sideways jump while opening up with both barrels to falling backward into a rolling getaway move, Max will execute moves other game characters can only virtually dream about.

Of course, Max isn't invulnerable by any means. If all that dodging and jumping doesn't quite get him out of danger and he ends up taking a bullet or two, he'll accurately reflect the injury. If he's shot in the leg, for instance, he'll limp his way through the rest of the game. And if he takes one through the chest, well…be sure to check out that exit wound coming out of his back before you reboot.

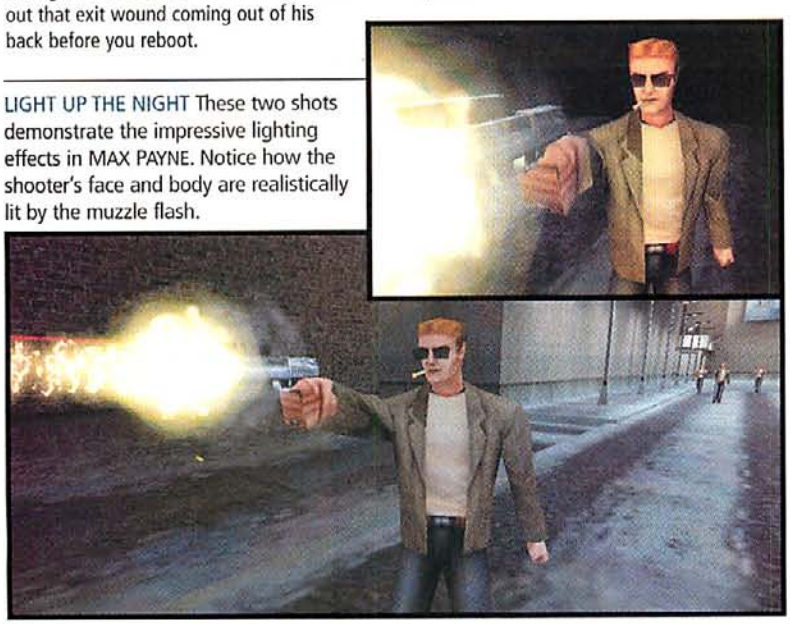


SPLATTERFEST 101 This shot demonstrates the particle rendering that the Remedy team is building into MAX PAYNE (notice the splattering blood).



Super Slo-Mo

One of the more novel aspects of MAX PAYNE is its use of slow motion. Throughout the game, the gamer will see many sequences play out in John Woo–style slo-mo action scenes that let you fully appreciate the level of detail while you experience that ever-so-important movie feel. The slow motion will be scripted into the game, so that it will kick in at predetermined times. Slow motion will also be



LIGHT UP THE NIGHT These two shots demonstrate the impressive lighting effects in MAX PAYNE. Notice how the shooter's face and body are realistically lit by the muzzle flash.

Max Payne

used as a reward of sorts for a well-placed shot on an enemy. If you score a difficult head shot, for example, a slow-motion instant replay will show the exchange from a different angle. Järvilehto says that Remedy is considering letting the gamer toggle the slow-motion mode on and off, but at present it is always on.

The designers also plan to make a fully slow-motion multiplayer mode to provide a whole new dynamic to the standard deathmatch. According to Järvilehto, this option will let you take more time to plan your moves—and to savor your enemy's destruction. It remains to be seen how this element will appeal to gamers, but the Remedy crew is very excited about this newest twist on the multiplayer theme.

You Will Now Die, Bad Guy

Weapons in MAX PAYNE will be strictly real-world stuff. If you're looking for alien death rays and plasma bombs, you're in the wrong place. However, that doesn't mean that the guns available in MAX PAYNE will be without *cojones*. Take, for example, a fully automatic shotgun that Remedy dubs "The Jackhammer." After seeing this thing in action, I was ready to trade in my BFG on the spot.

To enhance the realism of the guns, all weapons will be rendered using volumetric particle systems that model the weapon's muzzle exhaust and flash in great detail. To put things right over the top, the particles are randomized in each passing frame, resulting in a superrealistic look and feel. The bullet trajectories are modeled with real physics that take into account the effect that gravity has on each projectile—all the way down to that last shotgun pellet ripping through your victim's temple. And if you run out of ammo? Then it's time to pull out your trusty Louisville Slugger and the fresh can of whup ass that comes along with it.



FROM BACK STREETS TO BALLROOMS Max will go through a varied range of environments, from grimy warehouses to gilded mansions.



"The designers intend to take the real-world New York City scenes down a notch into the gritty underworld of film noir. Rudy Giuliani won't be pleased."

Comic Book...er... Graphic Novel Flavor

In designing MAX PAYNE, the Remedy team decided to incorporate one of its favorite pastimes, reading graphic novels, as a reward to gamers for completing a level. Instead of a boring "Level Loading—Please Wait" screen, graphic novel panels will round out the storyline while the next level loads.

As an aside, there are even rumors that a MAX PAYNE movie project may come out sometime after the game debuts. Through his connections with G.O.D., Gene Simmons of KISS has secured the rights for any such MAX PAYNE film. No word yet as to who would play Max—Gene himself, perhaps? Nah.



BULLET IN THE HEAD Max can do tons of cool John Woo–style dives and rolls.



Grow Your Own

Remedy will include an impressive package of editing tools with MAX PAYNE. The level editor, MaxEd, is the most user-friendly editor we've ever seen. It's a true drag-and-drop, WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) editor that will actually be easy and—get this—fun to use. After having slogged through some simple room design with DeathMatch Maker and WorldCraft, I was amazed at how easy it was to create a level with MaxEd. If all goes according to plan and the editor does indeed ship with the game, home-grown level designers will be in heaven.

The Bottom Line

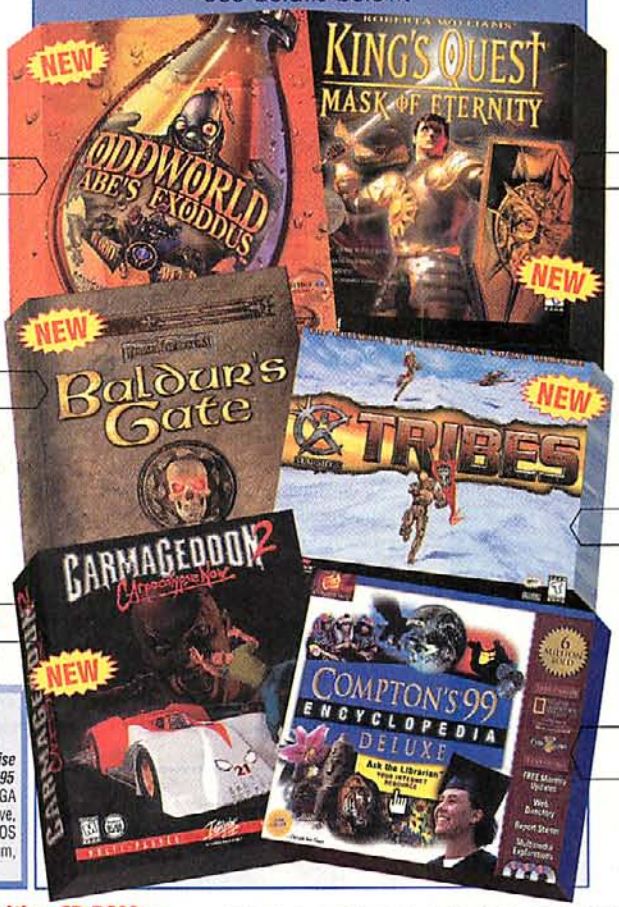
The danger in making a very cinematic game is that it will be pretty to look at, great to read about, and boring as hell to play. By adding new, experimental elements like slow motion, the Remedy designers are going out on a long, precarious limb. But if they succeed—and it looks as though they very well might, in spectacular fashion—they will take action gaming to the next level. Here's hoping they do. Watch upcoming issues of *CGW* for updates as MAX PAYNE nears completion. CGW

For more info, check out the MAX PAYNE Web site at ***www.maxpayne.com.***

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Heavy Metal: F.A.K.K.2

Sex, Guns, and Rock & Roll

Ritual Takes a Ride on HEAVY METAL: F.A.K.K.2



by Ken Brown

Heavy Metal is the ultimate teenage fantasy come to life: mind-bending animation, intense violence, and hard-driving rock. The 1981 movie was an electrifying ride across 11 unrelated (and inconsistent) stories linked by a mysterious green orb. Spawned by the fantasy magazine that featured some of the world's most psychotic illustrators, it became a cult classic.

Now, two all-new, wildly stylized *Heavy Metal* projects are heading our way. A new movie, coming this fall, will combine bizarre 3D animation with an epic story and a sexy female heroine (based on B-movie queen and former *Penthouse* Pet Julie Strain). Meanwhile, Ritual Entertainment is working on a game using the QUAKE III engine that will blend action, adventure, and innovative combat control in the *Heavy Metal* universe. Eager to see how the game is taking shape, we flew to Dallas to get the world's first look.

What the Hell Is F.A.K.K.2?

Heavy Metal: F.A.K.K.2, the movie, is the brainchild of Kevin Eastman, cocreator of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (hey, at least the cow-abungholes are helping to subsidize something interesting). The story behind the movie evolved from the 1993 graphic novel *The Melting Pot*, by Eastman, Simon Bisley, and Eric Talbot. After *The Melting Pot*, Eastman wanted to do an epic film with a strong female lead and an evil nemesis.



HAPPY MASK Gith Industries wants its workers to be happy.

"I always wanted to create a heroic adventure with a female star," says Eastman, "thriving in a backdrop that would combine the desperation of *Road Warrior*, the intensity of *Aliens*, the visual feel of *Blade Runner*, and the magnitude of Akira Kurosawa's *Ran*. It's intensely violent, very fast-moving, very fast-paced."

In the futuristic story, F.A.K.K. stands for Federation Assigned Ketogenic Killzone, a biohazard warning to interplanetary explorers. F.A.K.K.2 indicates a biohazard so dangerous that nothing can survive it. F.A.K.K.2 is also the name of an idyllic world and the woman who is trying to protect it. But the real reason Eastman coined the term is because he wanted his female lead to have a name that sounded like "F___ you!"

With love in her heart and two automatic, four-barreled blasters in her hands, F.A.K.K.2 sets out to free her sister from a ruthless monster (Lord Tyler) who ravaged their planet. The $15 million movie is coming this fall from Sony & Columbia Tristar. (If you want to see how it's taking shape, check out the *Heavy Metal* site at **www.heavy-metal.net/Default-2.htm**, and click on "Animation Background.")



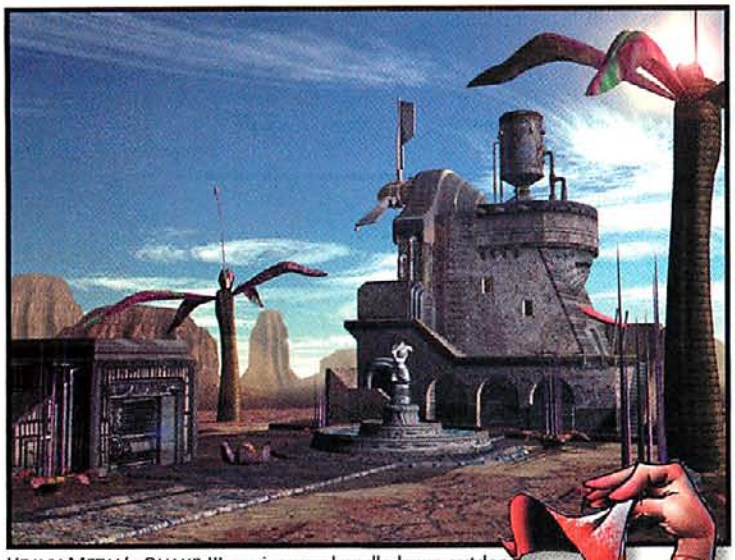


JULIE STRAIN Former *Penthouse* Pet Julie Strain provided the inspiration for the heroine in HEAVY METAL: F.A.K.K.2. Oh, and she's Kevin Eastman's wife.

What About the Game?

The game's story picks up where the movie leaves off. Players control F.A.K.K.2 (a.k.a. Julia, a.k.a. the StarStrider), who must now defend her homeworld from invasion by a Borg-like collective known as Gith Industries. (Who writes this stuff?)

Genre: Action/Adventure • ETA: Q4 '99 • Developer: Ritual Entertainment



HEAVY METAL's QUAKE III engine can handle large outdoor spaces, curved surfaces, and 24-bit color.

Gith—think Microsoft meets Mussolini in an H.R. Geiger nightmare—has been motoring around the galaxy in a spaceship strapped to a conquered, decimated planet. The company is looking for an upgrade and has discovered Julia's world. Time for our heroine to break out the four-barreled blasters again.

Ritual describes the gameplay as TOMB RAIDER-esque: third-person perspective with equal parts action and adventure. As with TOMB RAIDER, the designers chose the third-person perspective to show off their female character. But there is a more intriguing reason: Two-handed combat will allow both ranged weapons and melee weapons simultaneously.

"You'll be able to outfit your character with different combinations of swords and guns and be able to use both at the same time," said Project Manager Steve Hutchins. "Picture *Braveheart*-type slashing while wading through an onslaught of enemies. Right now we are looking at right- and left-hand attack buttons to keep things simple; that coupled with off-screen outfitting should reduce the overall numbers of keys you have to learn. You'll thank us later when you see how many enemies you can encounter at one time," Hutchins added rather ominously.

In addition, combat should be more grisly and realistic than in previous games. The game's QUAKE III engine allows body parts to be swapped or removed instantly, enabling such effects as blown-off limbs, gaping holes, severed parts that still move, and more. Expect new warnings about playing too soon after eating when the game ships.

Sights & Sounds

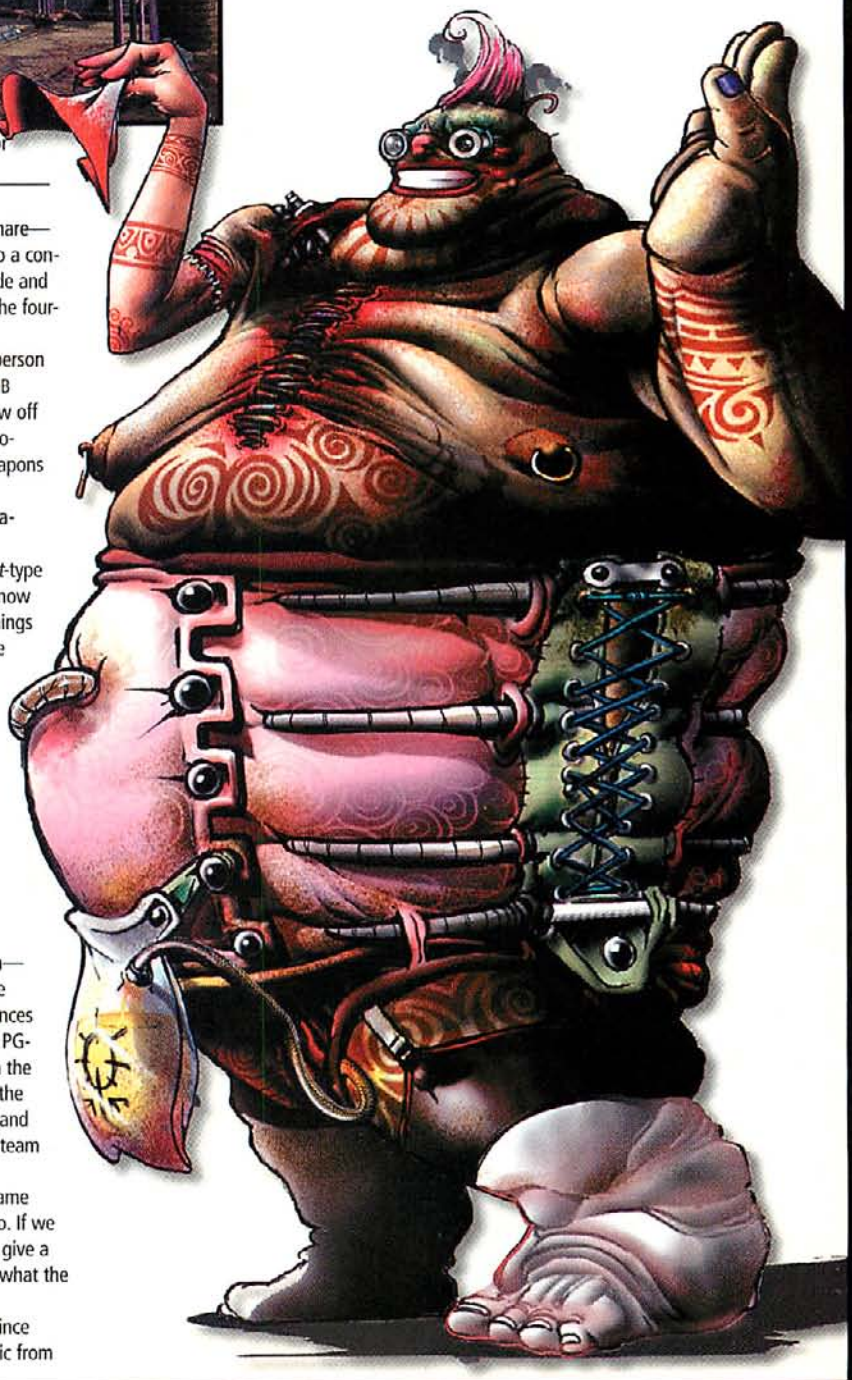
There are a couple of things for which *Heavy Metal* is known—both the film and the magazine—and those things tend to raise more than a few eyebrows. Judging by the early artwork, audiences can expect to get an eyeful in the movie, which will likely get a PG-13 rating. Nudity in games, however, is a sensitive matter, given the availability of games to minors. Developers are often caught in the middle between their desire to build visually interesting games and their need to sell those games to large retailers. What does the team from Ritual plan to do?

Art director Rob Atkins says, "We are going to make a fun game based around an adult movie/magazine with a sexy female hero. If we sneak in a nipple or two here or there, I doubt that anyone will give a shit. Wal-Mart and the other retailers are more concerned with what the box looks like on their shelves than the content."

Heavy Metal is also known for its hard-driving soundtrack. Since Ritual has full access to use the characters, voices, art, and music from

BELPHEGORIAN CITIZEN

These charming freaks are large, mentally deranged inhabitants of the Belphegorian slums. They relish in the physical and will go to extreme lengths to "perfect" themselves. Anything from removing an old arm to make way for a new one to aggravating the pox rash they have on their butt. The redder and more painful and pustulant, the better.

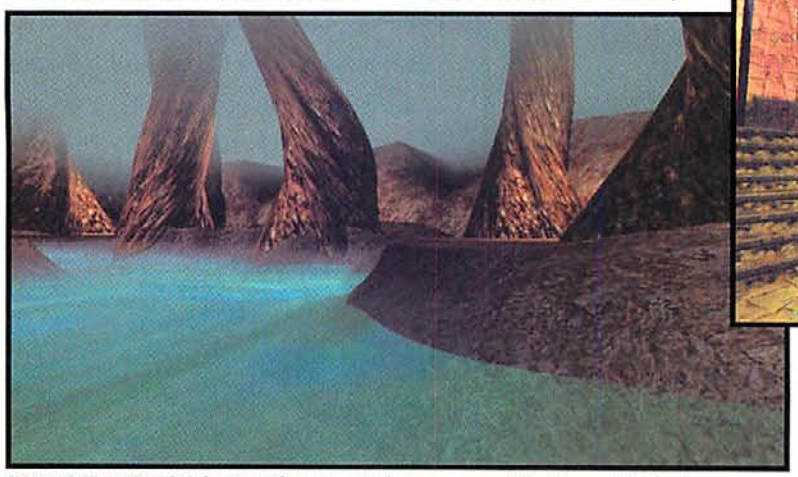


Heavy Metal: F.A.K.K.[2]

the movie sequel, it's likely the game will have a kick-ass soundtrack. At press time we were unable to obtain a complete list of songs, but Kevin Eastman has been talking with a number of music groups, including U2, Smashing Pumpkins, Hole, Metallica, KISS, Sammy Hagar, Alice in Chains, and Aerosmith.

With all of the assets of the movie at its disposal, plus the QUAKE III engine, Ritual has a very good chance of producing a standout game. Whether the company will or not depends on many factors, not the least of which is learning from the mistakes it made with SiN. To their credit, the designers have changed the way they work and affirm that they will perform whatever bug-testing is necessary in the future to ensure quality products. We sure hope so, because if they get it right, this game will rock in more ways than one. CGW

(G.O.D. feature continued on page 113)



SWAMP THINGS Ritual wants the game to have an organic, otherworldly look.



GROUND ZERO Julia's peaceful city will soon be overrun with Gith invaders.

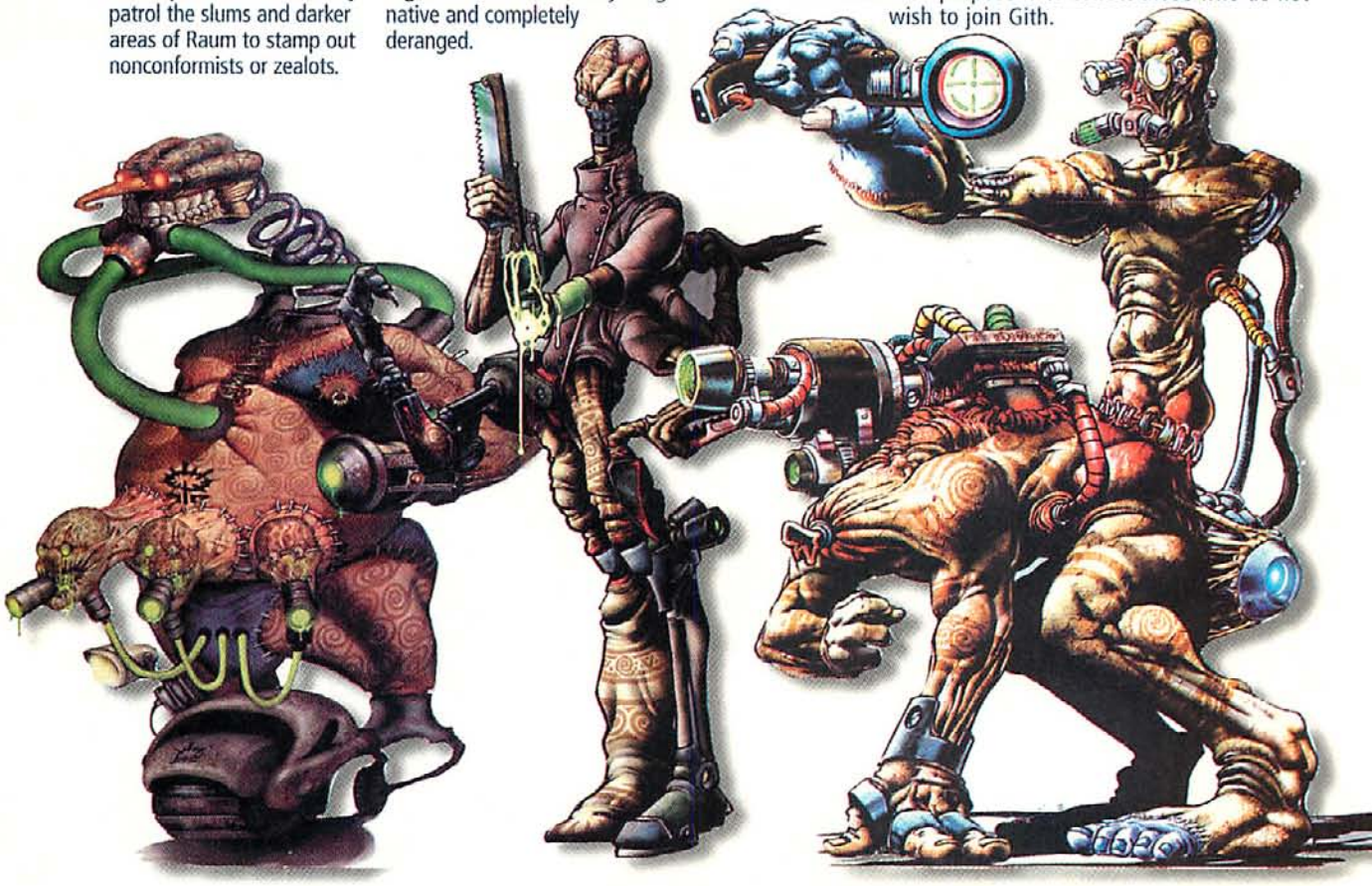
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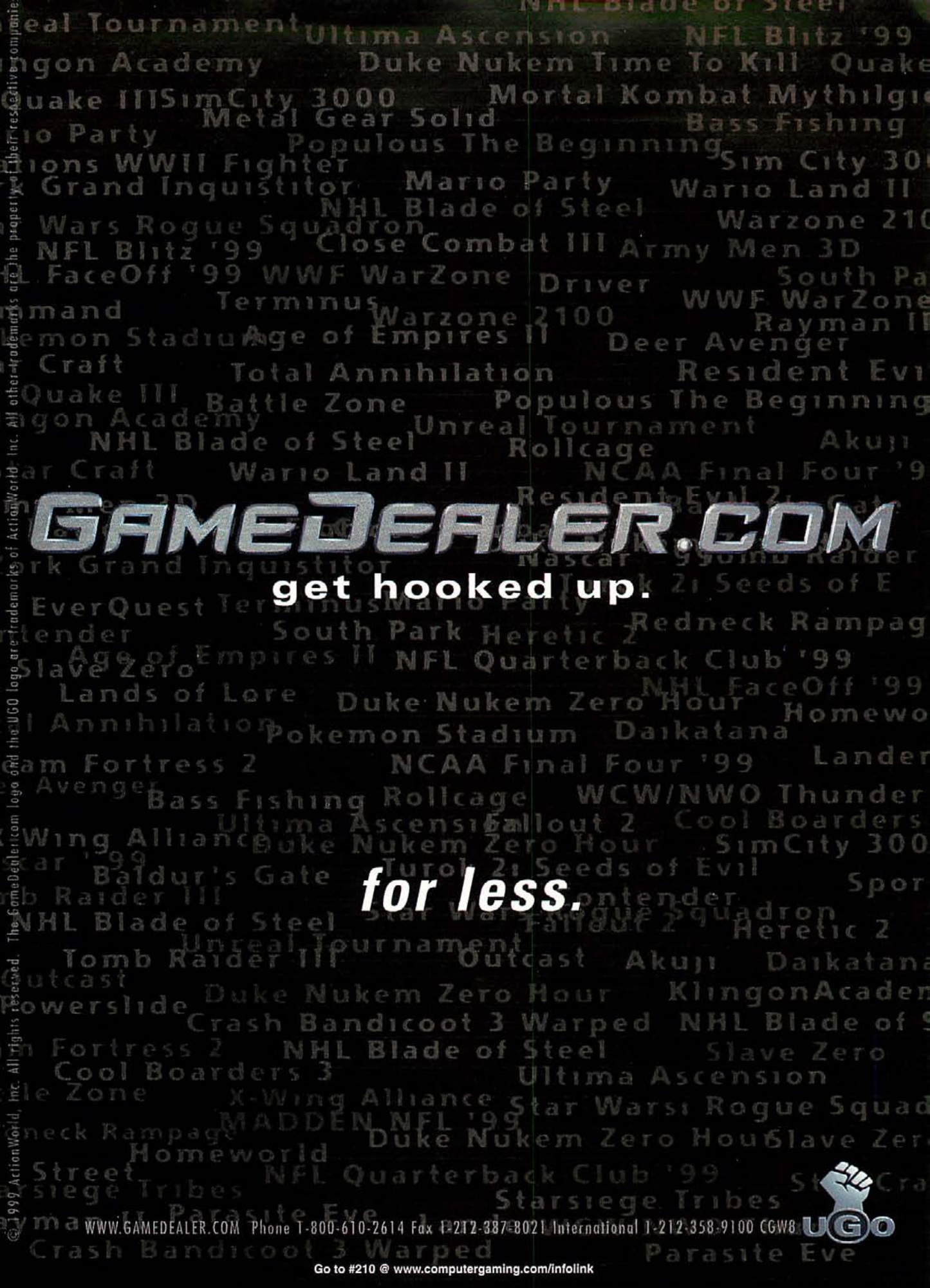
THE CAST

BELPHEGORIAN TROOPER Thought-police thugs that monitor the population for anticorporate activities. They patrol the slums and darker areas of Raum to stamp out nonconformists or zealots.

DR. ECHIDNA The CEO of the Phantom Limb Corporation as well as head of the House Digitorum. He is extremely imaginative and completely deranged.

FLESHBINDER Fleshbinders are the number one product made at the Phantom Limb Corporation. They are an amalgam of body parts and fluids of various races collected by Gith Industries. Their purpose is to collect those who do not wish to join Gith.





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KISS: Psycho Circus

KISS, the Game

The Psycho Circus Is Coming to Town

Genre: Action
ETA: Q2 '00
Developer: Third Law Interactive



KISS is back with a vengeance. The original line-up (Gene Simmons, Ace Frehley, Peter Criss, and Paul Stanley) is back on the world stage, touring in the United States and Europe and raising a new KISS army. Their licensing army is also on the march, spinning off KISS masks, KISS guitars, KISS Wrestling, and even a KISS computer game. Is it too much? It *always* is; that's why it's KISS!

Now in development, the computer game—KISS, PSYCHO CIRCUS: THE NIGHTMARE CHILD—is based on the *KISS, Psycho Circus* comic book series by Todd McFarlane, the creator of *Spawn*. Developer Third Law Interactive, a start-up group comprised of Ion Storm refugees, is using a modified version of Monolith's Lithtech engine, which was used for SHOGO and BLOOD 2. Third Law plans to rev the engine extensively and throw down a hail of nasties your way.

"We're an unproven group, so we want an intense, action-filled experience," says Sverre Kvernmo, game designer for Third Law. Gamers will have to contend with large groups of demon-spawn, the creations of an unborn evil that is somehow altering reality. As the game progresses, the gamer advances from mere mortal to a creature of godlike powers, based on McFarlane's characterizations of The Elder (alter egos of the members of KISS).

Gameplay will vary as you control each of the four Elders, with different environments, powers, and challenges. You'll need to assemble the five parts of each KISS member's costume to give you the power to defeat the Nightmare Child, since each item holds special powers. The platform-boots, for example, will increase your jump height; the breastplate gives you better protection, and so on. (We wonder what Gene Simmons' tongue will do.)

Watch for this interactive oddity to come out early next year.

Rune

Take Me You Viking

Play Out Your Nordic Fantasies in Rune

Genre: Action/Adventure
ETA: Q2 '00
Developer: Human Head Studios



Admit it, you've always wanted to put on the Viking helmet and go bash some heads. Here's the game that will let you fight battles with Viking weapons and explore a strange world where mythical creatures and gods exist. You'll play Ragnarok, a 10th-century Scandinavian warrior. You venture out to battle with warring tribes, angry gods, and giant snakes that breathe fire. If you can stop whatever seems to be annihilating the Viking population, you'll prove worthy of entering Valhalla, the great beer hall in the sky.

RUNE is being developed by Human Head Studios, composed of former members of FASA Interactive and Raven Studios. For RUNE, Human Head has teamed with Epic and is using a modified version of the UNREAL II engine.

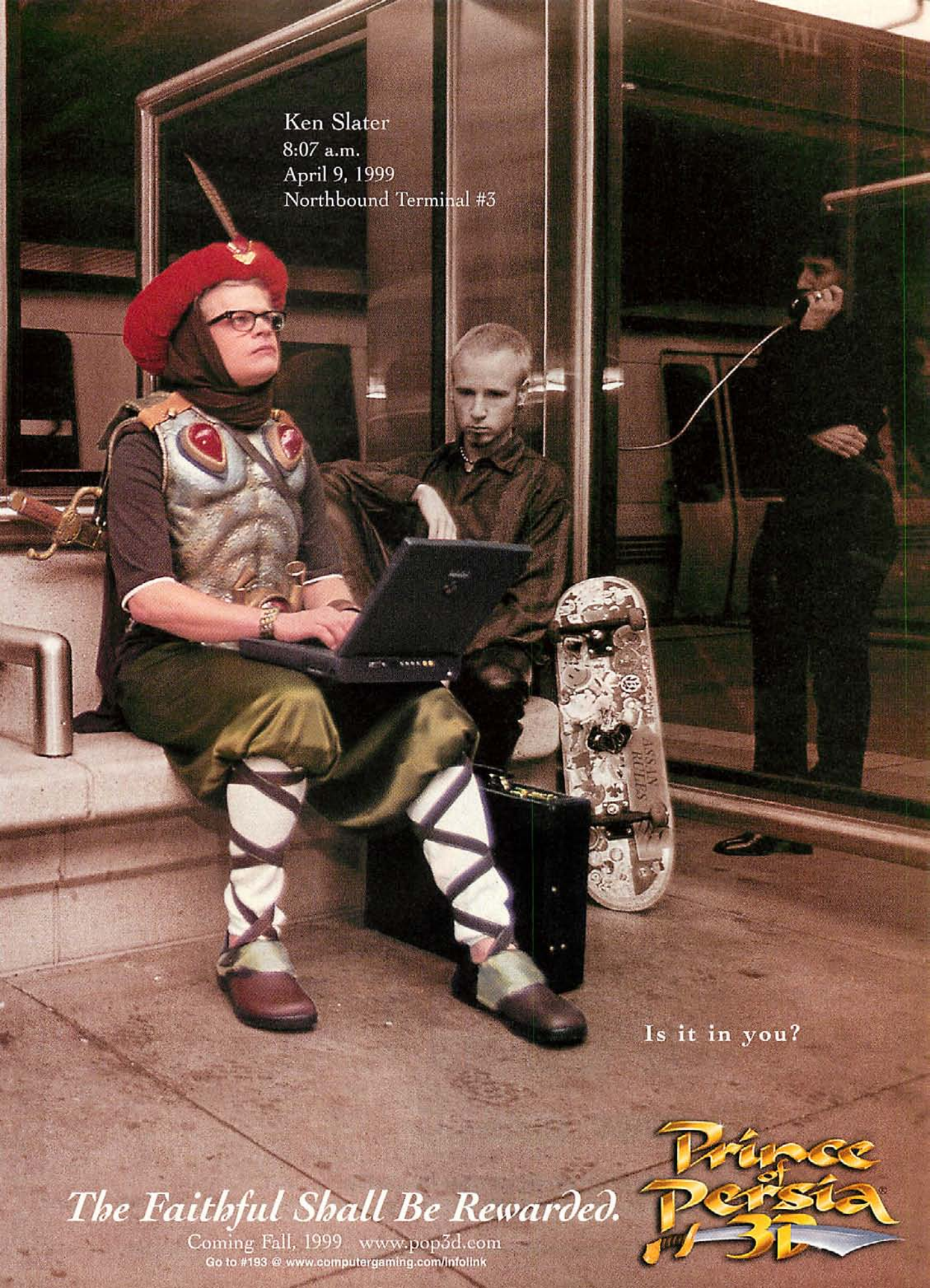
"Visually we're going to be on par with UNREAL II," says Human Head biz guy Tim Gerritson. "Some of the features we're building in include enhanced physics, more natural level design, curved surfaces, and ambient life. We want to make each level memorable. Our goal is to make a game that is epic in feel rather than scope."

Gamers will be able to equip themselves with armor and use an assortment of Viking weapons, such as axes, swords, and hammers. Ragnarok may also have a few magic spells up his tunic. The game will be designed with single- and multiplayer levels, so that you can cross swords and bash skulls with your friends.

Watch for RUNE's mystical take on action.



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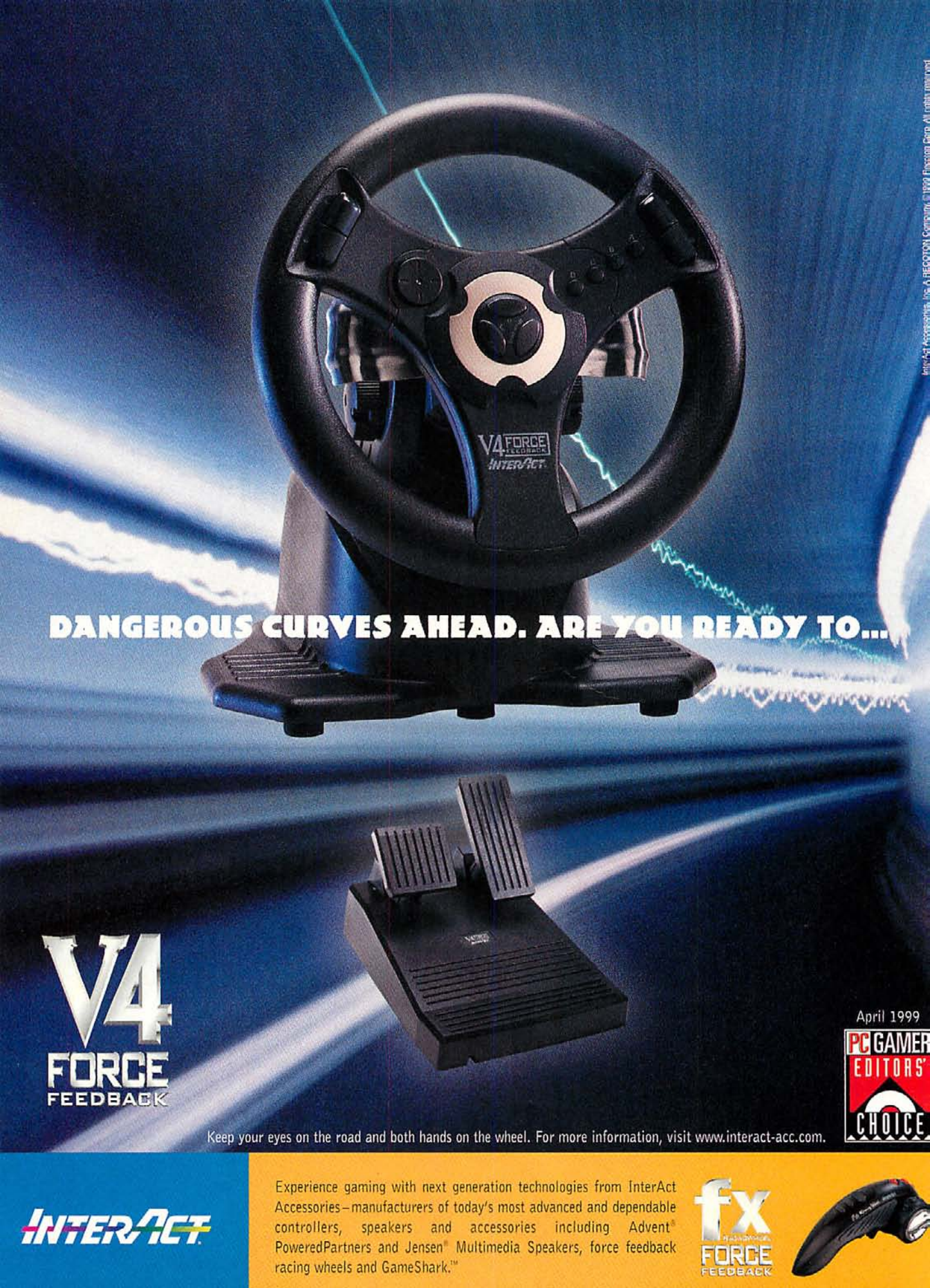
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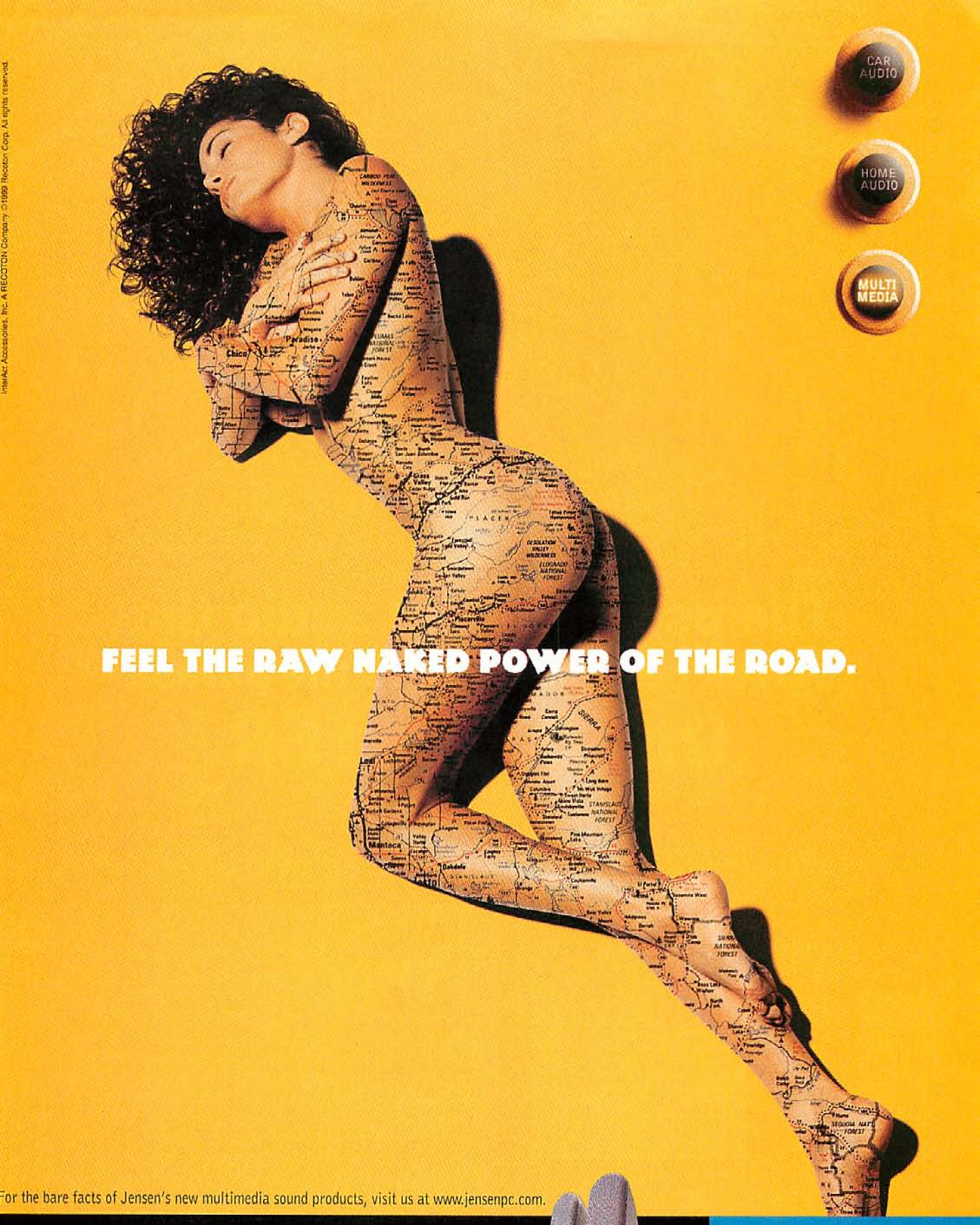
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Firewire's Uncertain Future

Licensing Squabbles and USB 2.0 Announcement Cloud Horizon

by Dave Salvator

Given its peer-to-peer abilities, high data rate, and relatively low cost, Firewire seems a great candidate for someday connecting your PC to your home entertainment center with a single wire. But between Apple's greed and Intel's control fetish, Firewire looks as though it may suffer several serious setbacks.

Apple recently announced that it was going to charge $1-per-port licensing fees for the manufacture of Firewire application-specific integrated circuits (ASICs). These fees, viewed by many industry types as excessive, could cause the price of Firewire (also called IEEE 1394) and Firewire-based products to be pushed up. As a result, Intel and other concerned companies may decide to engineer another version of Firewire, called 1394B, that dances around Apple's patents. Apple's licensing move also angered many in the PC universe, including industry heavyweights Microsoft and Compaq. And while Apple has since rethought its position, it's still unclear as to what the final arrangement will be.

Intel muddied the waters even further with its announcement at the Intel Developer's Forum of USB 2.0, which the company claims will have a top-end data rate of 240Mbits/sec—20 times the current top-end speed of 12Mbits/sec—thus making USB 2.0 potentially a more direct competitor with Firewire. The move marks something of a departure for Intel, which until recently was an avid supporter of Firewire.

There's big money at stake here, since the winner of this standards war will have its product not only in nearly every personal computer shipped (Mac or PC) but also in many home entertainment components, including DVD players, amplifiers, and TVs.

Firewire is currently better suited to be this universal connector, primarily because it's here now but also because, as a peer-to-peer technology, it doesn't need a root-hub to control all devices on a network—a limitation that USB has. At this point USB 2.0 is little more than a paper tiger, but unless Apple is willing to define licensing terms that are more reasonable, its current stance may well scuttle widespread adoption of Firewire and force the computer industry to devise an alternative, which could take more than 18 months. CGW

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TNT2 Comes Out Swinging

by Dave Salvator and Loyd Case

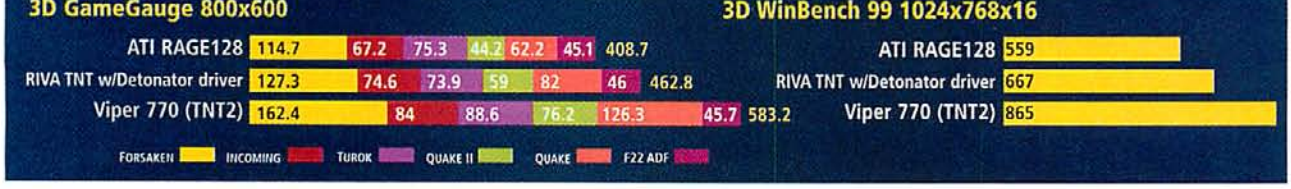
Last year, graphics chip rollouts were spread pretty well throughout the year. But now, with new chips from Matrox, S3, nVidia, and 3dfx all shipping within weeks of one another, there's one hell of a rumble taking shape in the marketplace. And judging from early numbers on Diamond's Viper 770, nVidia definitely won't be accused of bringing a knife to a gunfight. We got our hands on final hardware and beta drivers for the Viper, and what we saw was a very fast, very stable board that should keep nVidia at or near the top of the heap.

In comparison tests against a current TNT board using nVidia's reference drivers, as well as against ATI's Rage Fury, the TNT2 chip clearly took no prisoners. In 3D GameGauge testing, the TNT2 proved to be 40 percent faster than Rage 128, 30 percent faster than the TNT.

Diamond has put a fan on the TNT2 chip so it could clock the board up to 175MHz, and this 17 percent overclock certainly helps this TNT2 board post its impressive scores. And while nVidia has stated that the standard clock speeds for TNT2 will be 125MHz and 150MHz, Diamond's part seemed to run cool, generating little heat.

Just for fun, we booted up GT Interactive's POWERSLIDE, a good-looking driving title, and cranked the resolution up to 1600x1200x32, expecting the TNT2 to have a decent frame-rate. To our pleasant surprise, frame-rate was still very smooth, and image quality was very good, thanks in large part to running at the higher resolution.

Matrox's G400 and S3's Savage4 have yet to weigh in, but from early demos we've seen they're going to be solid parts as well. So between these guys, nVidia, and 3dfx, we're most likely facing a wealth of graphics card choices this summer. As soon as we can, we'll bring all of these guys to OK Corral and see who's the new fastest gun.





"European Air War's outstanding gameplay and wealth of features make it the current leader of the WWII simulation crop" *-PC Gamer, 89%, Editor's Choice Award*

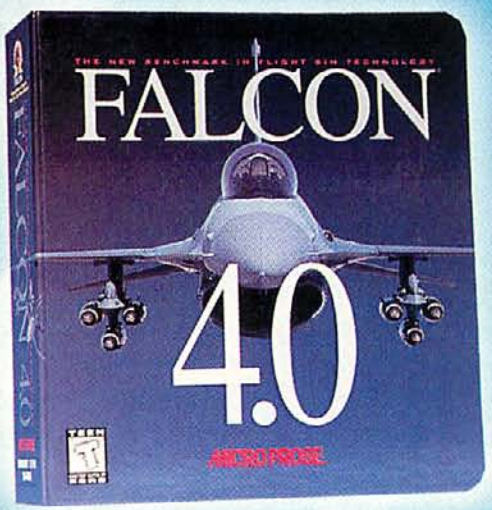
"This World War II simulation captured the feeling of being in a living, unpredictable combat environment better than any other sim released this past year" *-Computer Gaming World, 4 stars*

"European Air War succeeds at providing the experience that makes arm-chair fighter pilots believe they're truly leaving their mundane surroundings behind" *-Gamespot*

RACKING UP

"No previous sim covers so many different weapons and so many tasks in detail... it's all here and it's all beautifully executed" *-PC Gamer, 95%, Editor's Choice Award*

"Falcon 4.0 is the deepest, most complex air combat sim yet... The campaign also creates the greatest sense of playing a small but important part of a huge battle" *-PC Gamer*





"Thoughtful gameplay design and the effort to bring players a sense of the true fighter pilot's experience can be felt throughout the game" *-Computer Games Strategy Plus*





"European Air War combined huge dog fights, a great campaign system and realistic physics to make a game that was very hard to put down"
-IGN PC.com, Sim of the Year

"The care and attention to detail that went into every aspect of European Air War, from the hefty manual to the bomber nose art, represents a serious achievement"
-CNET GameCenter

THE KILLS!

"Bottom line: this sets the new standard in flight sims"
-Washington Post

"Falcon 4.0 is an incredibly detailed simulation that in many ways exceeds training systems in military use."
-Computer Gaming World



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Murphy's Field Day

A Lesson in Following My Own Advice

by Loyd Case

This column was originally going to be about nifty little utilities I use, and how they can help readers tweak or improve their systems. Maybe I'll still do that one some day. However, my research for the column was interrupted when Murphy's Law, coupled with my innate ability to overreach, got me in big trouble. It's such a good cautionary tale that I can't help writing about it.

It all began with Winalign, a little utility that ships with the Windows 98 Resource Kit. It supposedly restructures Windows programs so that they load more efficiently, speeding up software loading. It sounded like a good idea. In the help file for Winalign was a blurb suggesting that performance may not improve until you defrag the hard drive after running Winalign.

Meanwhile, Back at the Ranch

I decided it was time to re-architect my production system. I've been wanting to get more serious about learning 3D modeling and digital video, but being the kind of person I am, I wanted the production system to be the best performing system I could build. Although my priorities are different from those of most users, I'm still budget-constrained—I couldn't go out and build a hot-rod DV rig without wrecking my marriage. Then I realized that the system I use every day had an Ultra2 SCSI controller and two 7200RPM SCSI drives. That's big-time overkill for running Word, surfing the Net, and playing a few games, so I thought I'd make that my 3D modeling learning rig. I'd recently upgraded one of the Ultimate Game Machines to a Pentium III, so I had a spare Pentium II/450 available. I also had a couple of big EIDE drives and an Intel motherboard. All I needed was a case, a power supply, and a floppy drive.

At the same time, the no-holds-barred rig needed a new motherboard tray in the Inwin tower case, as I'd successfully stripped the screw holes on several mounting brackets. So I thought I'd swap trays.



LOYD CASE

Did I mention it was *CGW*'s deadline week?

To recap, I'd decided to run some new utilities on my main machine, build a new system, and swap motherboard trays on the power rig, all during deadline week. This is the point where someone with some common sense (my editor, maybe) should have showed up on my doorstep and told me I was nuts. My reach was definitely exceeding my grasp, but I didn't realize it. Then Murphy came a-knockin'.

A Few Simple Rules...

There are some rules of thumb that I use when tweaking or changing systems. Rule number one: Always test a new utility on a small scale until you know it's safe.

So, of course, when I ran Winalign for the first time, I ran it on the entire Program Files folder on my main production system.

Strike one.

Rule number two: Never, ever make multiple changes without testing each change first.

The next thing I did was run Norton Utilities Defrag Utility. As I was perusing the defrag utility, I came across a seemingly helpful item: the Norton Optimization Wizard. It stated, seductively, that my system would run better if I optimized the swap file. So I ran it. After a reboot, defrag came up and started running. Note that by now, I'd run Winalign on all my critical applications, run the system optimization wizard, and was defragging the drive.

> "Someone should have showed up on my doorstep and told me I was nuts."

Strike two.

Rule number three: Never, ever panic or show frustration. The gods of computing delight in torturing easily frustrated users.

I had to let defrag run all night (it takes a while to fully optimize a 9GB hard drive). When I came back the next morning, there was an error message indicating that a problem had been found with the hard drive and that Norton Disk Doctor or Scandisk should be run. So I rebooted. When Windows came up, every utility and driver that auto-loaded on startup crashed. So did Explorer. My system was totally hosed. So I rebooted to DOS and ran Scandisk. After about a thousand bad sectors were uncovered, I panicked. Roughly $450 later, I had a new 9GB drive. I used Ghost—a very cool partition-copying utility—to try to copy the old partition to the new drive. There were a number of "bad sector on read" errors, which wasn't good news. But the partition copy completed, and I booted the new drive. Explorer promptly crashed.

I did a refresh install of Windows 98. After doing this twice, and swearing a lot, I finally got a good boot. But whenever I would right-click on "My Computer," the system would hang.

Finally, I gave up. I nuked Windows 98 and did a clean reinstall, including all my applications.

Strike three, you're out.

It was a hard lesson—and what made it worse was that I knew what I'd done wrong. I ignored my own rules, got a little cocky, and ended up wasting a huge amount of time. But wait, there's more....

Cut to Scene Two

I thought I'd take a shortcut with the new system I was building and just boot off the Windows 98 full-install CD. At that point, the right thing to do would have been to copy the contents of the \win98 folder from the CD to the hard drive (after the drive had been formatted) and install from there. Instead, I ran setup direct from the CD (after having booted from the CD). Now, bootable CDs are wonderful—no more boot floppies with missing DOS drivers—but they aren't perfect. There's an annoying bug in the Windows 98 setup process that causes weird things to happen

during the setup process if you leave the CD in its bootable state—which of course I did. Normally, if I'd been focusing on just installing this system, I would probably have remembered that quirk, but I was also trying to troubleshoot my production system and swap motherboard trays on the big rig. After several tries, I remembered the problem with the bootable CD and copied the files to the hard drive. Then Murphy struck again—the mouse wouldn't work. After three installation processes and a couple of mouse swaps, everything was hunky-dory.

Meanwhile, the big rig was having its own set of problems. The tray swap went fine, but after rebooting, the SCSI hard drives would lock. Again, instead of focusing on the problem, I was also trying to install a new system and troubleshoot my production system. After much wailing and gnashing of teeth, I found some bent pins on the SCSI cable. Roughly $120 in SCSI cables later, the SCSI drives would still lock.

After a night's sleep, I remembered that I'd recently done a clean reinstall of Windows 98 on the big rig. The ASUS P2B-LS motherboard uses an Adaptec 7895 Ultra2 SCSI controller chip, and Windows 98 has built-in support. But there's a bug—either in the driver or with the motherboard BIOS—that causes the CD drive to get confused when you copy big files from one hard drive to another. Installing an updated driver that I'd downloaded much earlier from the ASUS Web page cured the problem.

Mea Culpa

So here I sit, out roughly $600 in hard drives and cables, and having had to painfully relearn lessons that I'd learned before. So this leads me to the last and final rule of computing:

Rule number four: Just when you get good enough to be arrogant about it, the gods of computing will make you pay.

Next time, I'll remember. CGW

Tech Tips

Q. When playing first-person shooters (UNREAL, HALF-LIFE), my system spontaneously reboots. I have dual Monster 3D II's in SLI mode, a hardware DVD decoder, a SCSI controller card, two SCSI hard drives, a DVD drive and a CD-R. What could be the problem?

A. *There are two possibilities. First, your power supply may be inadequate for the heavy load you're placing on it. Many off-the-shelf systems from companies like Dell and Micron come with measly 200W power supplies. You may need to upgrade your power supply to something beefier, like a 300W unit.*

The second problem could be heat related. Add an additional cooling fan to the case. You might even consider adding specialized Voodoo2 coolers. Also, clock back the Monster II's a bit, which could help reduce any potential heat issues.

Q. I tried to install TalonSoft's West Front recently in my spanking new Gateway system, but when I try to run the game, it keeps asking me to insert the CD. But the CD is in the drive! What gives?

A. *This isn't TalonSoft's fault. TalonSoft—and many other game companies—are moving to CD-ROM based copy protection mechanisms. In some cases, we've seen incompatibilities with certain CD-ROMs and DVD drives. However, the Gateway problem specifically lies with their BIOS. You need to get a BIOS update from the Gateway Web site and update your system. If this makes you nervous, have a Gateway technician walk you through the process.*

Q. Help! I just tried to download and install Internet Explorer 5.0, and my graphics card no longer works properly. It's a Diamond Viper 550. Is there any way to fix the problem?

A. *Diamond discovered a problem in certain cases where installs of new drivers somehow interacted with IE5. Diamond's now got a new driver on their Web site that fixes the problems with IE5.*

Q. I recently tried to add a 3Com PCI ethernet card to my system. It has an ABIT BH6 motherboard. The system refuses to install the drivers. How can I fix this?

A. *Try putting the NIC in one of the middle three slots. The two outside slots (the one next to the AGP slot and the other next to the ISA slots) share IRQs. However, the 3Com cards aren't happy about sharing IRQs.*

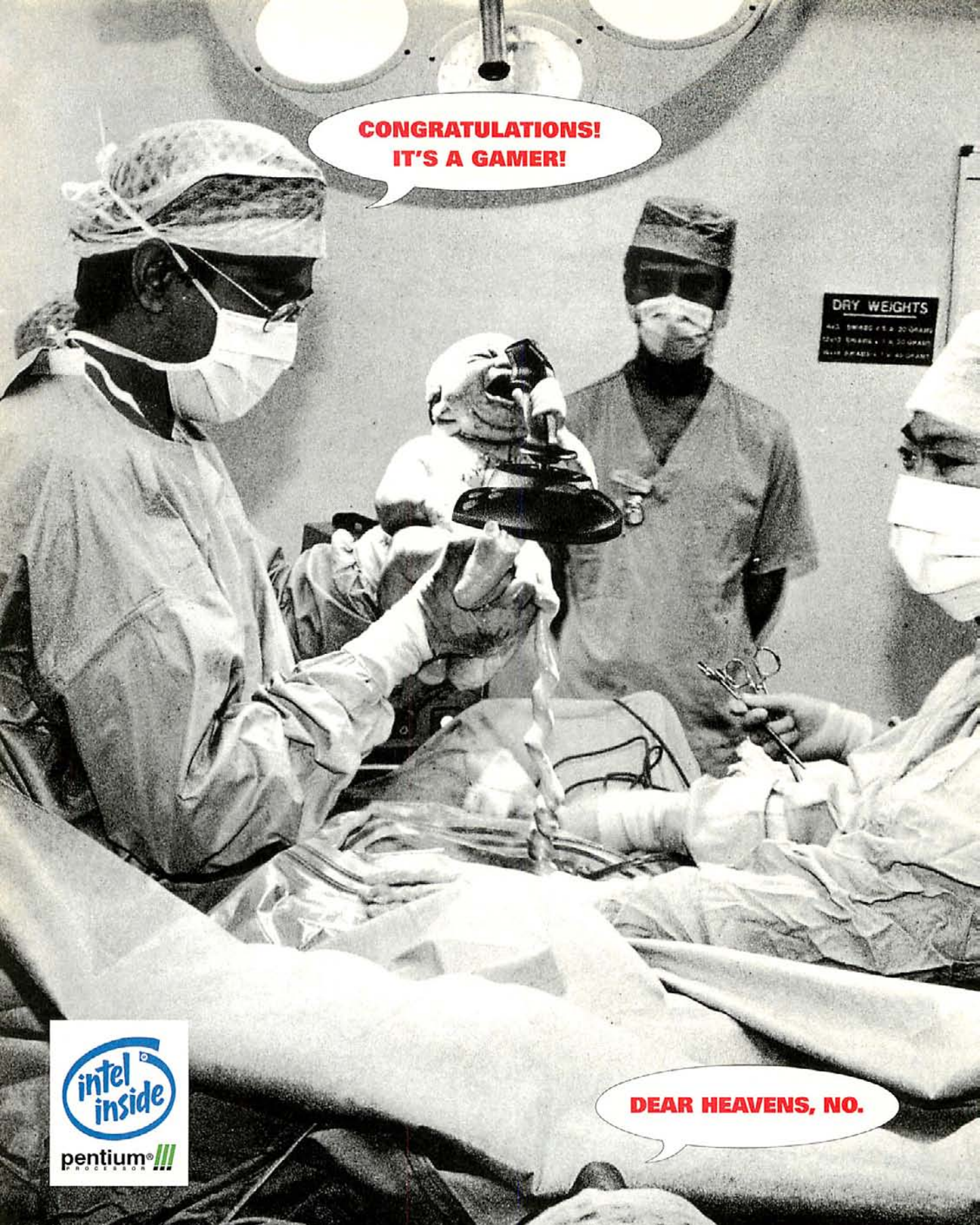
Q. I have a joystick connected to my sound card. I just got a new, USB gamepad. When I install them together, the gamepad shows up as the top device in the Game Controller Control Panel, and the joystick as the second device. All my games refuse to recognize the joystick. Is there any way to use both devices?

A. *Unfortunately, you may be out of luck. In the days of DirectX5.0, there was actually a bug in DirectInput that prevented the second joystick from being recognized - so no games really took advantage of it. Now, that "tradition" has continued, although a few games are supporting multiple controllers. Microsoft is trying to evangelize game developers to support multiple controllers, but it may be some time. Meanwhile, the only thing you can do is manually move the joystick to the top slot when you want to use it.*

Q. I have seen the terms "OEM" and "white box" on discounted video cards. What do these terms mean? Is it OK to buy these video cards?

A. *OEM stands for "original equipment manufacturer," which is an oxymoronic term that means a product was neither manufactured by nor originated within the company that shipped it. White box hardware is essentially the same. Both terms refer to hardware that is sold to dealers who are theoretically supposed to build it into whole systems. OEM hardware typically comes without software, except for drivers. In a few cases, it may also have fewer features. (TV output capability is a feature often left out of white box hardware, though not always.) In the past, you really had to watch out, as some white box hardware may actually be less capable and perform poorly, despite the same name, but that's not as prevalent. Some memory configurations may only be available in OEM hardware (for example, 8MB TNT boards).*

Send your tech questions to Loyd at CGW_Letters@zd.com.



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‡ The advertised monthly payment excludes taxes, shipping and handling and is based on a fixed Annual Percentage Rate (APR) of 13.99% with repayment in 48 months. Your minimum monthly payment may differ depending on your rate, loan amount, applicable taxes, shipping and handling charges. Your APR is a fixed rate and will be as low as 13.99%, 15.99%, 17.99% or 20.99%. These rates are in effect as of March 1999 and are subject to change. Final approval and rate are subject to verification of your income and credit status. This is a revolving loan. Your minimum monthly payment and repayment period will be re-calculated at the time of a later advance. The Micron Loan Program is a financial service provided by Household Bank, f.s.b., a federal savings bank and Equal Housing Lender.

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Cache	512KB internal L2 cache	512KB internal L2 cache	512KB internal L2 cache
RAM	128MB 100MHz SDRAM	128MB 100MHz SDRAM	256MB 100MHz SDRAM
Hard Drive	15GB Ultra ATA 66 hard drive*	15GB Ultra ATA 66 hard drive*	18GB 7200 RPM Ultra ATA 66 hard drive*
Monitor	17" Micron 700Cx monitor (15.9" display)	17" Micron 700Cx (15.9" display) monitor	19" Micron Trinitron (18" display) monitor
DVD/CD-ROM	40X CD-ROM drive*	6X max speed DVD-ROM drive	6X max speed DVD-ROM drive
Modem	3Com USRobotics V.90 WinModem**	3Com USRobotics V.90 WinModem**	3Com USRobotics V.90 WinModem**
Graphics	16MB Diamond Viper 550 TnT 2X AGP graphics	16MB Diamond Viper 550 TnT 2X AGP graphics	16MB Diamond Viper 550 TnT AGP graphics
Sound System	PCI 128-voice Wavetable sound	PCI 128-voice Wavetable sound	Sound Blaster LIVE! Value audio card
Speakers	Advent AV009 speakers	Advent AV009 3-piece speaker system	Monsoon 3-piece flat panel speaker system
Warranty	5-year/3-year Micron Power™ limited warranty 3-year on-site service warranty	5-year/3-year Micron Power™ limited warranty 3-year on-site service warranty	5-year/3-year Micron Power™ limited warranty 3-year on-site service warranty
Training	1-year free‡ training @ Micron U online	1-year free‡ training @ Micron U online	1-year free‡ training @ Micron U online
Software Included	Microsoft® Windows® 98 Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition Free* Office 2000 upgrade Norton AntiVirus 1-year EarthLink Total Access	Microsoft Windows 98 Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition Free* Office 2000 upgrade Norton AntiVirus 1-year EarthLink Total Access	Microsoft Windows 98 Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition Free* Office 2000 upgrade Norton AntiVirus 1-year EarthLink Total Access
Also Includes:	MiniTower case 104-key enhanced keyboard Microsoft IntelliMouse® 3.5" floppy drive	MiniTower case 104-key enhanced keyboard 3.5" floppy drive Logitech 3-button mouse	MiniTower case 104-key enhanced keyboard Microsoft IntelliMouse 3.5" floppy drive SuperDisk LS-120
Factory Direct Price	$2,099 $56/mo. Personal Payment Plan 48 mos.†	$2,399 $65/mo. Personal Payment Plan 48 mos.†	$3,299 $89/mo. Personal Payment Plan 48 mos.†
Upgrade to:	Upgrade to: 17" Micron Trinitron (16" display) monitor 6X max speed DVD-ROM drive***	Upgrade to: 19" Micron Trinitron (18" display) monitor 20GB Ultra ATA 66 hard drive*	Upgrade to: 22GB Ultra ATA 66 hard drive* Sony CD R/RW (Recordable/ReWritable)***
Factory Direct Price	$2,299 $62/mo. Personal Payment Plan 48 mos.†	$2,779 $75/mo. Personal Payment Plan 48 mos.†	$3,699 $100/mo. Personal Payment Plan 48 mos.†

The Critics Rave

New! PC Magazine Editors' Choice — Millennia C400 Feb '99

New! PC World Best Buy — Millennia 500 MAX Apr '99

PC World Best Buy — Millennia 400 MAX *1 Power Desktop *1 Gaming System Oct '98

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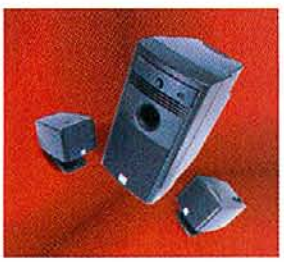


COMPONENT	PRODUCT	PRICE	THE SKINNY
Motherboard	ASUS P2B-LS	$350	And it's cheaper than a standalone Ultra2 SCSI card.
CPU	Pentium II/450	$605	It's the top of the heap, for now.
Memory	256MB CAS/2 Corsair PC100 SDRAM	$570	Just think, a quarter-gigabyte.
Disk Controller	Built-in Ultra2 SCSI	$0	80MB/sec.
Primary Graphics	Hercules Dynamite TNT	$139	Stability, speed, and cooling.
Secondary Graphics	Quantum3D Obsidian X24	$349	The ultimate, single-slot Voodoo^2 card.
Floppy Drive	Teac	$20	You still have to have one.
Hard Drive	Seagate Cheetah 18	$955	It's big, it's fast, it's loud...two out of three ain't bad.
Backup	Iomega Jaz 2	$325	2GB of backup.
Hard-Drive Cooler	APS Technologies drive cooler	$40	Cool it, baby.
CD-ROM	Pioneer 6x SCSI DVD	$249	New Pioneer slot-drive DVD
Monitor	Sony F500	$1,750	Perfectly flat. Just perfect.
Primary Audio	Diamond Monster Sound MX300	$89	For four-speaker DirectSound, A3D, and EAX.
Speakers	LFT-11	$500	Beautiful imaging, clean sound.
Rear-Channel Speakers	Jamo CS-5	$500	Ultimate rear-channel powered speakers.
Modem	Copper Rocket DSL modem	$400	DSL at last.
Networking	Built-in Intel 10/100 Ethernet chip	$0	For fragging my buddies.
Case	In-Win Q500 full-tower ATX	$115	New improved model.
Power Supply	Turbocool 300	$129	More power, Scotty!
Keyboard	Logitech Newtouch	$45	In with the Newtouch, out with the Natural.
Mouse/Pointing Device	Logitech Cordless Wheel Mouse	$59	Off the leash...
Action Game Controller	ThrustMaster Fusion Digital	$25	Comfortable USB gamepad.
Flight Joystick	ThrustMaster F22 Pro	$129	It just feels right.
Throttle	ThrustMaster TQS	$115	More control than anyone needs.
Rudder Pedals	ThrustMaster Elite RCS	$79	Nearly perfect foot placement.
Driving Controls	ECCI CDS 4000	$1,129	For the serious sim driver.

TOTAL: $8,666

LEAN & MEAN





COMPONENT	PRODUCT	PRICE	THE SKINNY
Motherboard	Abit BX6 rev 2.0	$139	Five PCI slots, Softmenu, 440BX—ready for Katmai.
CPU	Celeron/400	$165	Effectively the same as a PII/400.
Memory	64MB Corsair PC100 SDRAM	$121	The only thing better would be 128MB.
Disk Controller	Built-in UDMA/33	$0	NA
Primary Graphics	Hercules Dynamite TNT	$139	Stability, speed, and cooling.
Secondary Graphics	Guillemot Maxigamer2	$99	Voodoo^2 for those Glide games.
Floppy Drive	Teac	$20	Still gotta have it.
Hard Drive	Maxtor 4320 8.4GB	$175	Fast and now more affordable.
CD-ROM/DVD	Pioneer DRU-704	$69	36x and cheap to boot.
Monitor	Optiquest V95	$485	Solid 19-inch monitor at a budget price.
Primary Audio	Diamond Monster Sound MX300	$89	A3D and clean audio for under a C-note.
Secondary Audio	NA	$0	NA
Speakers	Yamaha YST-M28s	$60	The best damn $60 speakers. Period.
Modem	Diamond Supra 56e	$106	Solid performance, good price.
Networking	NA	$0	NA
Case	Elan Vital T10-AB	$82	*The* case for upgraders.
Power Supply	Built-in, 235W	$0	NA
Keyboard	Logitech Newtouch	$45	In with the new, out with the Natural.
Mouse/Pointing Device	Logitech PS/2 Wheel Mouse	$18	More frames per second???
Game Controller	ThrustMaster Fusion Digital	$25	Solid USB gamepad

TOTAL: $1,837

The Fine Print: All recommendations based on actual evaluations.

Prices listed are average low quotes from Web price search engines like **www.computershopper.com** and **www.pricewatch.com**. You can also check prices at online stores like **www.necx.com**, **www.esc-tech.com**, and **www.buycom.com**. *—Lists compiled by Dave Salvator and Loyd Case*

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CONGRATULATIONS to the Spring '99 PGL Finalists!

Here's a complete list of the 16 survivors of the Spring '99 Regular Season, who will be battling for fame and fortune at the upcoming championships — with a few factoids thrown in. For interviews and full bios of all 16 finalists, along with loads of other info on the live Spring '99 championships, check out the PGL Web site at www.pgl.com !



QUAKE II



Alex "bad-habit" Pogozelski
Favorite Saying: "Next time I'll play with my monitor on."



Eric "DR-SaboTaJ" Manfredi

Kurt "Immortal" Shimada

Jason "Jmaster" Siqui

Gordon "K8-Gloucester" Luk
Hobbies: Table Tennis, Tango, and Reading

Bon "Kuin" Danan

Sebastian "Sybak" Lenart
Hometown: Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

Erik "Verader" Spoor



STARCRAFT™



Dave "BOO!" Howell

David "DeepBlue" Magro
Season 1 Strategy Champion!

Guillaume "Grrrr" Patry
Season 3 finalist! (aka "TheInsaneFrog")

Patrick "Kain-the-Feared" Chapelsky



Christopher "Pillars" Page
Hometown: Andover, Mass.

Wayne "Soso" Chiang

Stephen "taurus49" Chan

Dennis "~WarAngel~:-" Lee

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Flat 'n' Noisy

by Dave Salvator

A flat-panel display is quite likely in your future. The question is, when? We've seen so-called 15-inch flat panels (whose viewable area is more on par with a 17-inch CRT monitor) hitting the streets for under $1,000, and as these prices continue to drop, flat-panel starts to look more appealing. But look before you leap.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★☆☆☆

PROS: Painless installation; integrated power/signal cable; decent image quality in games.

CONS: Severely noisy display on test patterns; blurred text in Windows 98 and text-mode display.

Price: $850 (street)
Manufacturer: KDS Technologies

www.kdsusa.com

Because of bandwidth limitations, analog flat-panel displays' image quality is often inferior to that of their CRT counterparts. One such example is KDS' new VSF15 display. Its image quality is decent in games but not up to snuff for Windows 98 and command-prompt viewing.

The VSF15 is a breeze to install, and its power cord and VGA signal cord are integrated into a single strand, making for less behind-the-PC clutter. The VSF15 is a plug-and-play monitor, and Windows 98 recognized it on boot-up.

The first sign of trouble came when the onscreen display (OSD) information reported the unit was displaying 1024x768x16 at 70Hz refresh rate. This is a letdown because most CRTs can easily display 1024x768x16 at 85Hz. Four OSD buttons are mounted on the back, forcing you to have to feel around, braille-style, in order to tweak the monitor's settings.

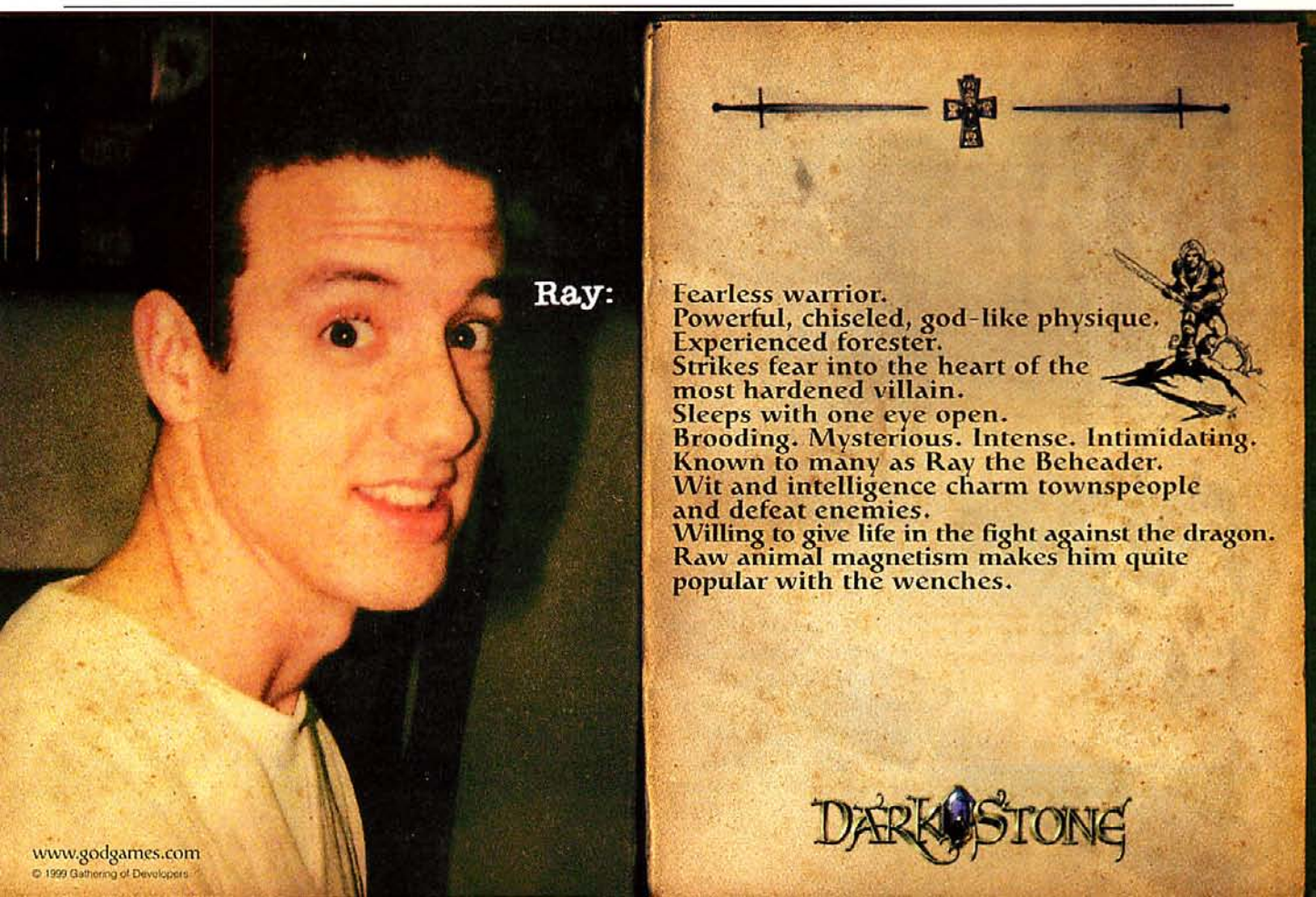


The first visual glitch I noticed was that onscreen text in Windows 98 was blurry and often shadowed. The effect got worse when I brought up a DOS command-prompt window. While running the VSF15 through a series of monitor test patterns, I encountered a lot of visible "noise" that looked similar to what you get on TV when a station isn't tuned in correctly. Color photographic test images (24-bit) fared better, looking pretty good at times in spite of some flaws.

The news for games is better. HALF-LIFE, JANE'S WWII FIGHTERS, and VR BASEBALL 2000 all looked pretty good, though even there I occasionally saw shadow effects caused by the display.

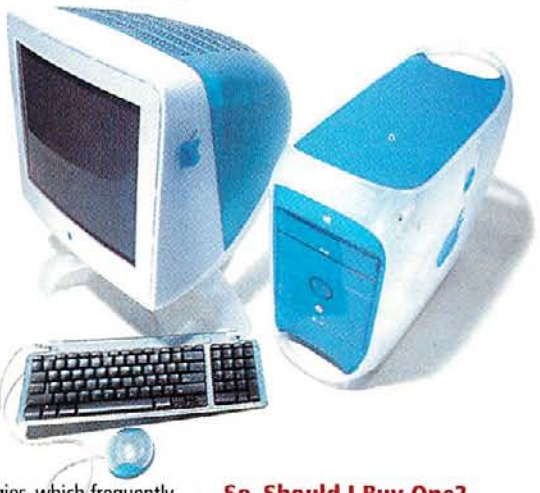
Flat panels are still in their infancy on the desktop. Digital flat-panel displays will go a long way toward solving analog's current shortcomings, but until a final standard is hammered out, the choices for digital flat-panel tie you to graphics chipsets that you as a gamer probably won't want. In the meantime, KDS' offering is passable for games, but for that same money you could get a 21-inch CRT (if you've got the desk space) and have enough dough left over to pick up two new games as well. CGW

photo: Michael Falconer



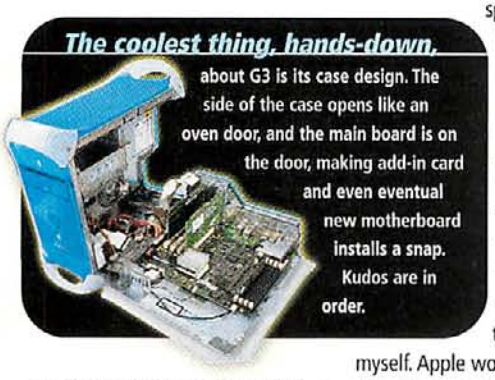
Mac Gaming Revivalist

A Solid Performer, but Not Without Drawbacks



by Dave Salvator

Recently, *CGW* ringmaster Johnny Wilson opined that the Mac was on the comeback trail. I'm sure many of you initially reacted the same way I did by asking, "Okay, what has Wilson been smoking, and can I have some?" But Apple has indeed been revived by iMac sales, which at last report were still going strong, and after pounding on a new G3, I'm here to report that Apple's got a pretty good gaming box on its hands.



The coolest thing, hands-down, about G3 is its case design. The side of the case opens like an oven door, and the main board is on the door, making add-in card and even eventual new motherboard installs a snap. Kudos are in order.

Basically, a Well-Hung iMac

The new G3 touts Apple's now-standard sleek design, but the improvements go much deeper than its case. The new G3 has an available 400MHz G3 PowerPC CPU and a built-in ATI Rage 128 graphics chipset—not bad. It also sports other cool features like FireWire, USB, Ethernet, and Ultra-SCSI 2 storage components.

But the news from Cupertino isn't all good. Despite getting more right than ever, Apple has still left a few things out of the G3s. The obvious omissions include a modem, a floppy disk drive, a pair of stereo speakers, and a decent mouse and keyboard.

I'm writing this review on the G3, and as with its kid brother the iMac, the only way I can transfer the text from this machine to my usual rig is to email it to myself. Apple worked very hard to drive down cost on these G3s, and to its credit, the baseline 300MHz system starts at around $2,000, including monitor. But come on, Apple, be it ever so pedestrian, users still need removable media built into the system.

The 8.5.1 version of the MacOS has several interface improvements; Internet configuration is easier, for example. But it's still missing a game-controller control panel.

Many game controller makers, including ThrustMaster, are making Mac drivers for their USB devices, so there are some decent options out there. But getting them working isn't as easy as it should be.

Gotta Call That Progress...

Apple has finally pulled its head out of its...umm...out of the sand when it comes to gamers, and the G3 sends the message loud and clear. Apple's gaming woes are no longer hardware-related. But the Mac platform is still dogged by game scarcity—mostly due to past Apple strategies, which frequently left game developers in the lurch. If Apple wants to be any kind of player in the "consumer market space," it needs to realize that its future is inextricably linked to gaming.

Steve Jobs recently stated that Apple's new mantra is "games, games, games." Let's hope that the company has the wherewithal to translate this new mantra into sustained action.

So, Should I Buy One?

The 400MHz Mac G3 we tested comes in at $3,500. Meanwhile, Dell's latest 500MHz Pentium III rig comes in at only $2,000. Gamers have to ask themselves if the aforementioned trade-offs, coupled with the wait for top-shelf Mac games, is worth a 75 percent price-tag premium for their next system? The answer, more than likely, is no. CGW

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★☆

PROS: Great case design; solid performance; OpenGL compatibility; less expensive than past Macs.

CONS: Still pricey compared to PCs; cheesy hockey-puck mouse; lacks AGP; game support is still iffy.

3D SUPPORT: 3D Rave, OpenGL.

Price: $3,500 as tested
Manufacturer: Apple Computer

www.apple.com

Gentlemen, Start Your Benchmarks



On the performance front, the G3 is a solid contender. Between its 400MHz G3 PowerPC CPU and its ATI Rage 128 chipset, this machine is ready to rumble. Although I couldn't get Apple or ATI to confirm, I've heard that the Rage 128 chip is being clocked at 75MHz, which, given Rage 128's twin-pipeline design, yields a peak fill rate of 150MPixels/sec—the equivalent of about one and a half Voodoo^{2}s.

Running ZD's MacBench, this G3 was solid across the board, and the Rage 128 rips through MacBench's graphics tests. Turning to games, we ran MACQUAKE's three TimeDemos and compared the results to the RIVA TNT-based STB Velocity 4400's QUAKE numbers (in our March issue). We tested the Velocity 4400 on a Pentium II 400MHz with 128MB of system memory, so the test systems are comparable. Unfortunately, MACQUAKE only runs at 640x480, which these days is pretty low-res, but G3 posted an average of 65.8fps. The Velocity 4400, on the other hand, running at 800x600, posted a frame-rate of 74.5.

There's no provision for disabling V-sync in G3's Rage 128 driver, so monitor refresh may have slowed the G3 somewhat. But still, in this case, the PC outpaced the G3. But to be fair, other games, including UNREAL, TOMB RAIDER II, MYTH II, and DARK VENGEANCE, all looked good and played well.

Dreams Die Hard

by Loyd Case

The Holy Grail for today's controller makers seems to be to develop the perfect 3D game controller. Unfortunately, the Titan's Sphere isn't it.

When I first saw prototypes of this unique 3D game controller, it looked promising. The way the controller worked resembled controllers used for Waldos (those robotic controllers used to handle highly radioactive materials). The grips fit comfortably in your hand, and the whole affair rests in your lap. Additionally, the Titan's Sphere is very easy to configure—it operates like a standard, four-axis, four-button Windows controller (which means it also works in DOS).

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★½☆☆☆

PROS: Standard four-axis analog controller; funky looks.

CONS: Button placement almost forces accidental presses; calibration is a royal pain; steep learning curve.

Price: $130
Manufacturer: SGRL

www.sgrl.com

In practice, it's quite awkward to use. This first becomes apparent when you try to calibrate it. Due to the sculpted grip and the button placements, it's damn near impossible to calibrate the thing without accidentally pressing a button. Pressing a button in the middle of calibrating a Windows game controller jumps the control panel to the next step.

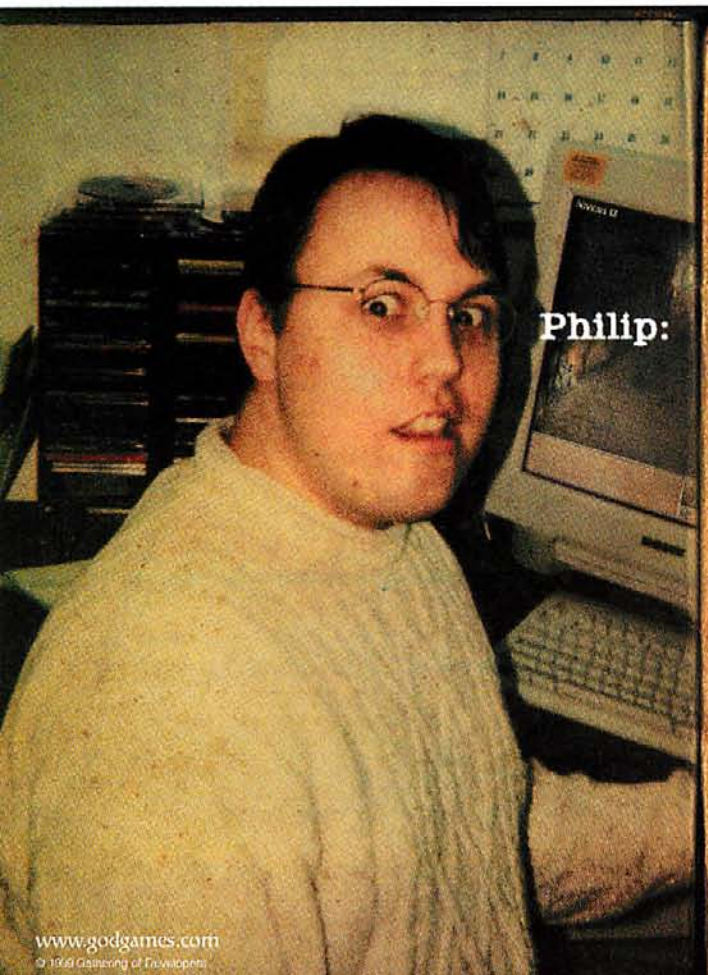
Once you get past that process, you move to gameplay, where the awkwardness continues.

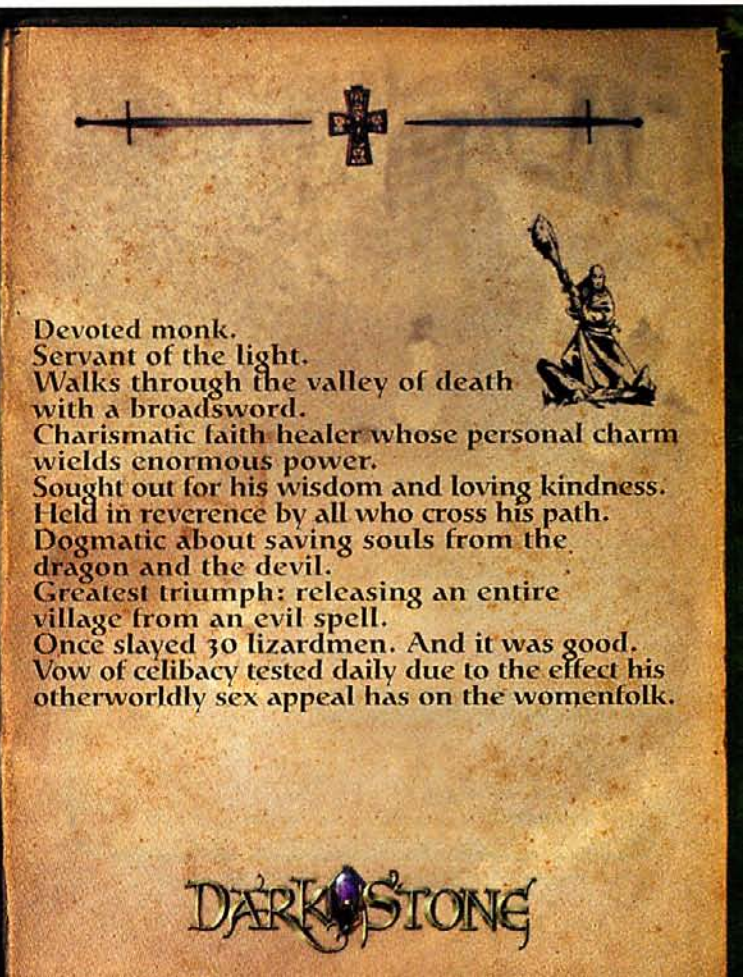


In some games, the Titan's Sphere seems quite natural—BATTLEZONE and DESCENT II come to mind. But even in those cases, it took a good half an hour to get comfortable. After extended gameplay the sculpted grips became slippery with sweat. Additionally, my arms got pretty tired—even though the controller rests in your lap, there's a tendency to pick it up as you're trying to rotate the grips. Button placement is awkward, too—it increases the chances of pressing buttons at just the wrong time. On some other games—notably 3D shooters like QUAKE II—the controller is hopeless.

So if you're looking more for a conversation piece than a great controller, the Titan's Sphere may be your bag. But don't expect to become a great 3D game player with it. CGW

photo: Michael Falconer



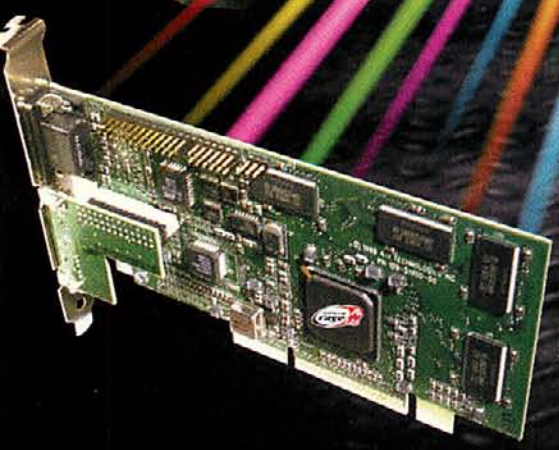


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STB VOODOO 3 3000 — Not Supported

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Perfectly Flat and Nearly Perfect

by Loyd Case

Face it, monitors are just not sexy. But if there ever could be a sexy monitor, the PT795 would qualify.

This new 19-inch monitor from veteran manufacturer ViewSonic is a member of the new generation of "perfectly flat" displays. Although it uses a (relatively) standard aperture grill tube, the PT795 achieves its flatness by first adding a layer of glass that optically corrects the underlying curved image—it's essentially a weak lens. Flat glass is then added on top of the curved glass, and that's what you see. At first glance, the display appears almost concave, because we're all used to seeing curved images.

You'd think that adding two layers of glass like this would distort the underlying picture, but during image quality tests, the only defect I could find was a bit of corner moiré distortion. Color registration was precise and the overall image quality was sharp.

To sweeten the pot, ViewSonic adds a USB hub to the PT795. There's a slight twist, though. In addition to registering a standard USB hub, Windows 98 also finds a "USB Human Interface Device." In other words, the hub is an active device. It enables ViewSonic's monitor control software, which allows you to set up the monitor more easily than if you used onscreen displays (although it was unavailable for testing). However, at least one game with a subtle DirectInput bug crashed on startup—until the monitor's USB hub was disconnected from the PC. Most games shouldn't have this problem, however, and the hub worked great with several USB game controllers. The PT795 also has a high bandwidth and can support an 87Hz refresh rate at 1600x1200; it maxes out at 1920x1440 resolution.

So if you can afford its hefty price tag, then the PT795 is a gorgeous display that will do justice to any of today's graphically intensive games. CGW

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

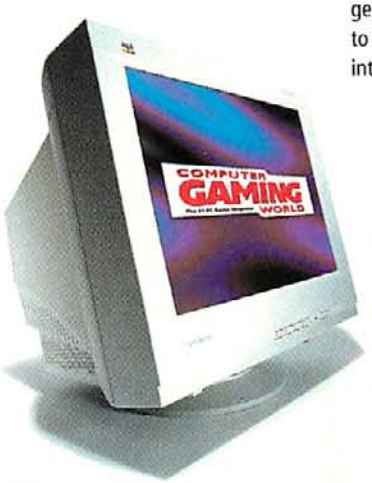
★★★★½

PROS: Ultra-flat screen, bright image, high bandwidth.

CONS: Pricey.

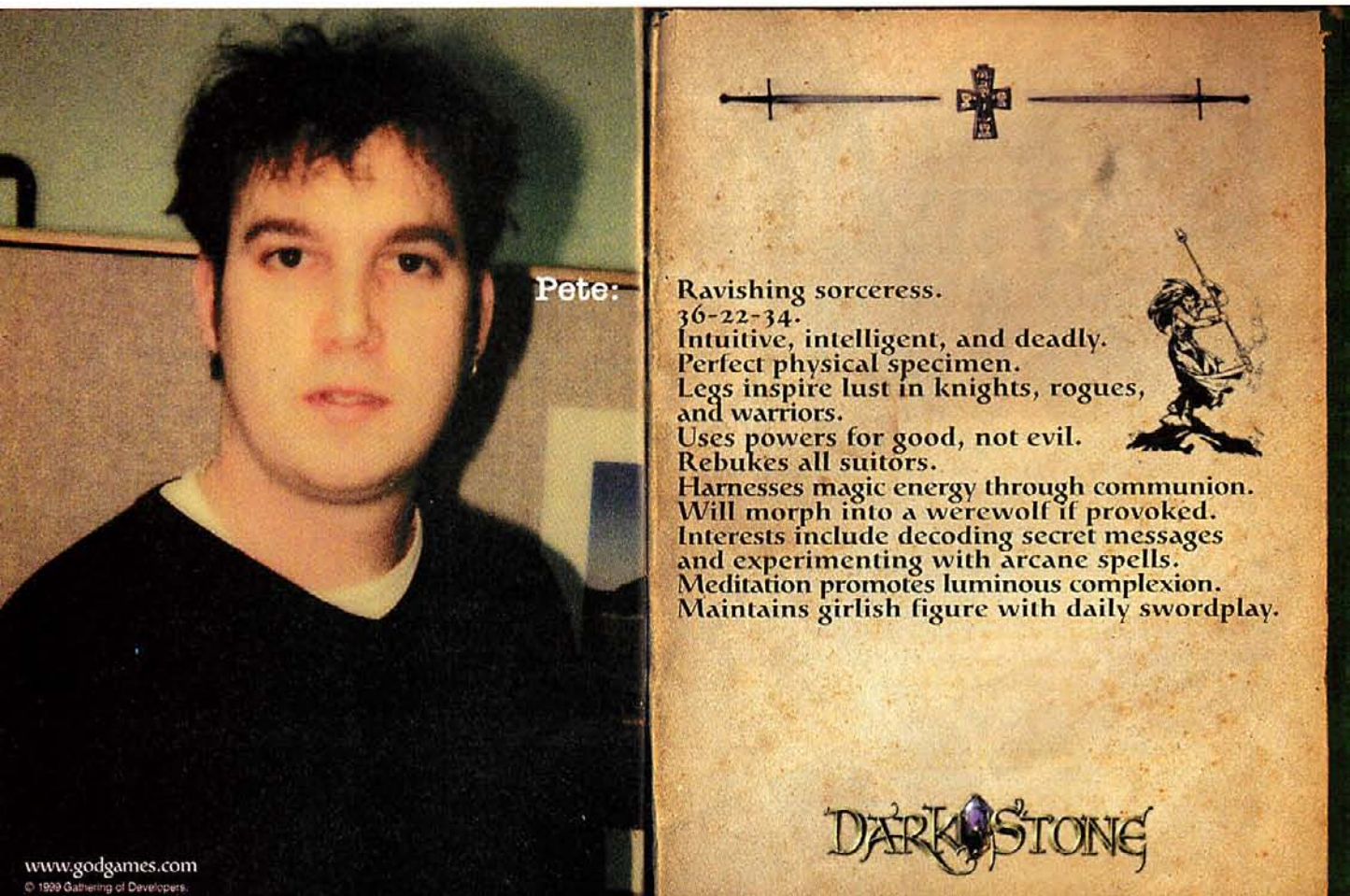
Price: $875 (estimated street price)
Manufacturer: ViewSonic

www.viewsonic.com



COMPUTER GAMING WORLD EDITORS' CHOICE

photo: Michael Falconer





From MicroProse, the originator, come the greatest advances in Civilization yet.

- Three Epic Games: The Original, Fantasy, and Sci-Fi.
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- And you can still play the classic Civilization II, now extended into the unknown with new challenges and perils.

In stores August 1999

RATING PENDING RP ESRB

HASBRO Interactive

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MICROPROSE
www.microprose.com

6x Slot Drive Sizzles

by Loyd Case

Snap! Doh!

These were the sounds made when I leaned against a PC with an open CD-ROM drive not long ago. It was the sound of the CD tray breaking, and it meant shelling out money for another CD drive, a trip to the store, and some time spent with a screwdriver. That's why I really like slot-loading CD-ROM drives. With one of these, all you do is slip the CD into the front slot (much like a car CD player), and the drive sucks the CD in. There is no protruding tray to break off (or to serve as a place to put my coffee while I work).

Now Pioneer is shipping a low-cost slot drive—the DVD-103S—that delivers a sizzling 6x DVD-ROM speed and acts as a 32x CD-ROM drive to boot. In CD WinBench 99 testing, the drive posted a score of 1,430, easily outpacing the Creative Labs 5x DVD drive that we reviewed several issues ago. The Pioneer's access time was better, too, at a quick 90.4ms.

Pioneer's drive comes in two flavors, EIDE (with Mode 4 DMA support) and Ultra SCSI, so you even have a choice of interfaces (we tested the EIDE drive). It may be hard to find the bare drive, but resellers like HiVal carry the drive as a part of a DVD kit (check out **www.hival.com**).

If you think DVD drives are slow when it comes to running your game CDs, think again. The current third-generation DVD drives are more than fast enough for CD-ROM chores, and you get the added bonus of DVD. CGW

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★½

PROS: Fast DVD and CD-ROM; slot-loading.

CONS: More expensive than a standard CD-ROM.

Price: $125 (estimated street price)
Manufacturer: Pioneer

www.pioneerusa.com

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD EDITORS' CHOICE



photo: Michael Falcone







•Fully 3-D characters and environment

•Simultaneous control of 2 characters

•Random Quest Generator ensures maximum playability

•Manual camera control allows you to rotate 360 degrees and zoom in and out

•100 different enemies based on 30 different characters

•22 weapons and 32 spells

•Supports multi-player mode

Developed by Delphine Software Inc.

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Enter the world of Darkstone and leave your identity at the door. Surviving this medieval world, living under the shadow of a nefarious dragon, will require nothing less than a complete transformation. As a knight, monk, thief, or sorcerer, you will creep through dungeons, explore towns and wilderness, and slay armies of nasty enemies on your quest to collect the seven orbs that can defeat your firebreathing nemesis. Look deep inside yourself. Is there a dragon slayer within?

DARKSTONE

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How Do We Rate?

★★★★★
Outstanding The rare game that gets it all right. A must-play experience.



★★★★☆
Very Good Worthy of your time and money, but there are drawbacks.



★★★☆☆
Average Either an ambitious design with major flaws, or just vanilla.



★★☆☆☆
Weak Seriously lacking in play value, poorly conceived, or just another clone.



★☆☆☆☆
Abysmal The rare game that gets it all wrong. Pathetic. Coaster material.



We review only finished products—no betas, no patches.

Quote o' the Month

"I'm ready for my neural implant now. Crack open my skull and stab that little microprocessor deep into my medulla oblongata. At least as some unholy union of man and machine I'll actually be able to play HEROES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC III my every waking hour. —*Robert Coffey*"

CG EDITORS' CHOICE GAMES

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD EDITORS' CHOICE

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Starsiege — 156



EA Superbike — 165



South Park — 147



CGW COASTER OF THE MONTH!

JUNE REVIEWS

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GAME	RATING	PAGE
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EA Superbike	★★★★★	**165**
Extreme G2	★★☆☆☆	151
Heroes of Might & Magic III	★★★★★	**170**
Imperialism II	★★★★☆	173
Microsoft Golf 99	★★★☆☆	169
NASCAR Revolution	★½☆☆☆	162
North vs. South	★½☆☆☆	176
Resident Evil 2	★★★½☆	145
Rollcage	★★★☆☆	151
South Park	★½☆☆☆	147
Starsiege	★★★★★	**157**
Turok 2	★★★☆☆	149
Wages of SiN	★★★½☆	151



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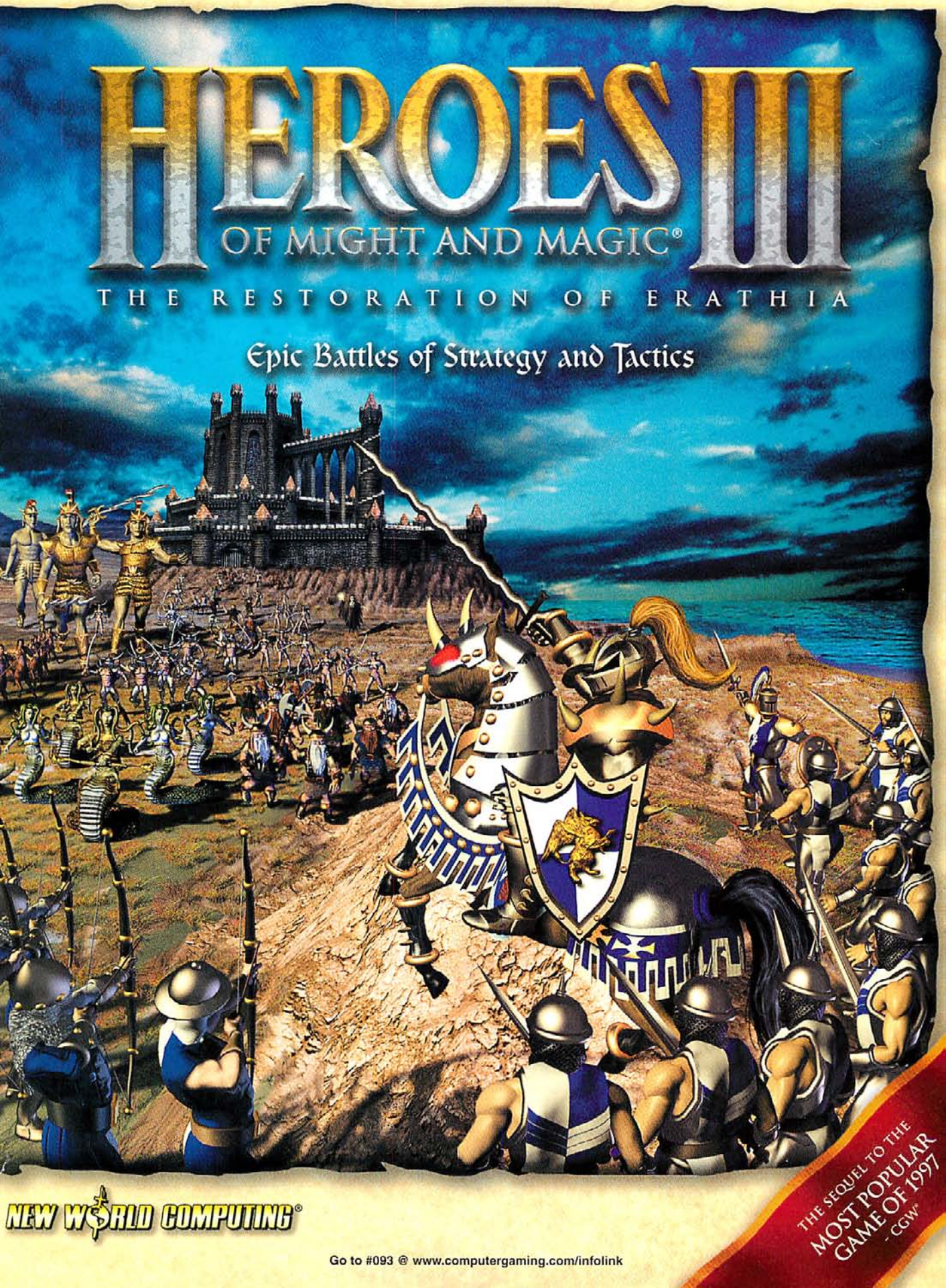
EVERYONE
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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*September Issue of Computer Gaming World, Top 100 Chart

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Battle Fatigue

The Return of the Other Little Green Men

by Tom Chick

A cute concept that was not fully fleshed out, the first ARMY MEN placed the little plastic figures from our childhoods in real environments: actual forests and canyons rather than the carpeted staircases and backyard flowerbeds that were the killing fields of our youth. Aside from featuring the occasional puddle of melted plastic, the game almost completely wasted its theme. ARMY MEN II continues this disappointing tradition by making only a few half-hearted nods to the true milieu of these little green men—the imaginary battlefields of our childhood bedrooms, our dens, and our neighborhood yards.

There are some clever maps set on places like kitchen counters and model tables. But these levels are too few and far between, serving as interludes between dull real-world environments. The developers of ARMY MEN II just don't seem to understand that this game is at its most interesting when the little green men play in our world.



GETTING THE SCOOP Make sure the parking brake is set on the backhoe before your troops fall into formation.

The single-player campaign is a curious mix of arcade action and sometimes frustrating map puzzles. There are some fun touches, like magnifying glasses that fry enemies with focused sunbeams, and suicide troops with M80 firecrackers strapped to their backs. There are also bits of humor, particularly the riffs on *Apocalypse Now*. But these feel more like diversions than the meat of the game, which is a silly story about warring plastic factions in an alternate universe.

The maps are much bigger and more interactive than in the first ARMY MEN, allowing you to burn trees, enter buildings, and destroy objects that aren't hard-coded obstacles. But there are problems: The graphics have a rough, low-res look that hasn't come very far since the last game.

The logic of the action also seems somewhat flawed: Your troops can't so much as crawl over a butter knife, and a simple mushroom proves to be impervious to mortar fire, bazookas, and flamethrowers. The result is that many of the maps seem to be little more than glorified mazes.

Full-Plastic Jacket

Although it appears to have pretensions to real-time strategy, ARMY MEN II is very much an action game along the lines of CONTRA or RETURN FIRE. You take direct control of an infantryman whose gravelly voice makes Clint Eastwood sound shrill. Although you can command other troops, they really aren't useful as anything other than Keystone Cops–style bodyguards: They cluster around you and shuffle nervously, occasionally attacking enemies in range.



FEEL THE BURN A magnifying glass applies a little intense scrutiny to an enemy tank.

Luckily, gameplay in ARMY MEN II is primarily a matter of charging headlong at the enemy, because the limited choice of commands that you've got at your disposal doesn't lend itself to many tactical options. It would have been nice to be able to split your men into separate groups to cover a wider range of terrain, but there's no telling what these little bubble-headed troopers will do when left to their own devices. Give them a destination and sometimes they'll simply stop halfway there. ARMY MEN II could be accused of poor pathfinding if it actually got around to that more often.

In fact, ARMY MEN II has no real AI. The enemy reactions are either scripted, or they trigger when you enter an activation radius. You can set up multiplayer games against the computer, but the AI simply amasses troops and makes a beeline for its objective. Perhaps even more disappointing is that the multiplayer games can be played only on real-world maps.

Fortunately, ARMY MEN is still a good multiplayer game with a strong online following. It offers several fun variations on Capture the Flag and a long list of option toggles. Multiplayer matches in the first game were almost fatally flawed by powerful air strikes and paratroopers, but in ARMY MEN II these attacks can be effectively trumped with antiaircraft guns.

Is it worse to completely miss the point of a game concept (ARMY MEN) or to tease players by not taking full advantage of it (ARMY MEN II)? At least 3DO is moving in the right direction. At this rate, ARMY MEN III should be the game we're waiting for. CGW

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★½☆☆



PROS: Much better than the first ARMY MEN; some good maps and power-ups; fun, flexible multiplayer gaming.

CONS: Still misses the point; nonexistent AI; poor control of friendly troops.

DIFFICULTY: Easy.

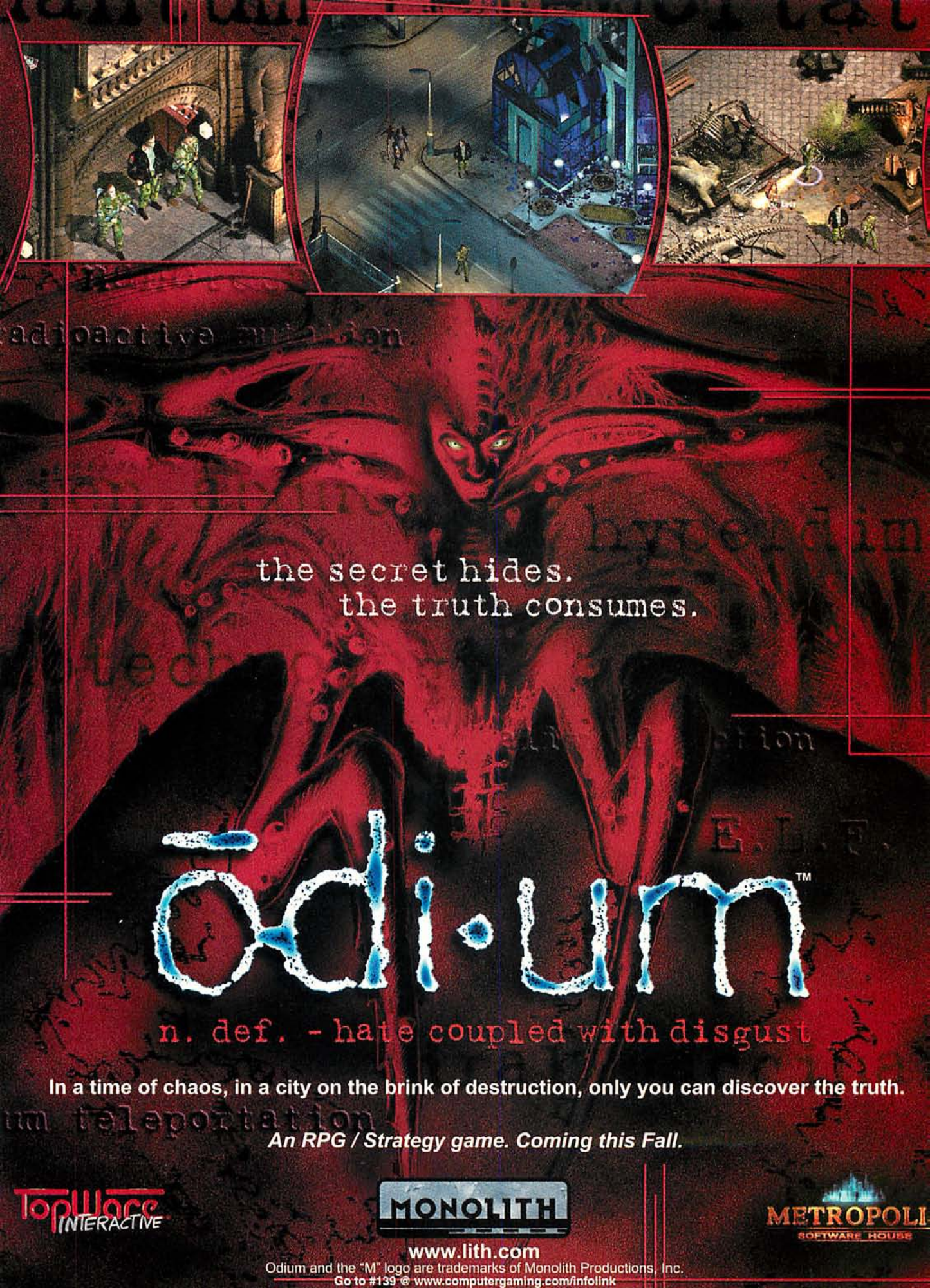
REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 90, 16MB RAM, 150MB hard-drive space.

3D SUPPORT: None.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: IPX, TCP/IP, serial, modem, HEAT, and Mplayer (2–4 players); 1 CD per game.

Price: $39.95
Publisher: 3DO

www.3do.com


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Zombie Jamboree

They're Dumb, They're Ugly, and They're Hell-bent on Eating Your Brains!

by Jesse Hiatt

RESIDENT EVIL 2 will probably stand as one of the best console games of the 20th century. Too bad this isn't a console magazine.

More than a few developers who've passed through our offices have readily admitted their debt to the horror classic; however, those same developers have been able to complete their entire production cycles in the time it took Capcom to release this port.

RESIDENT EVIL 2: PLATINUM EDITION is going to have trouble competing with all those more advanced made-for-PC titles. But RE2 is still a game worth playing, if only for its solid gameplay, its strange Japanese translations, and its wacky humor.

RE2 takes place in a universe so faithful to the plot conventions of the classic *Night of the Living Dead* movies that you could almost consider the game an unlicensed adaptation. Both are slim on characters and sets but are definitely thick with drama, tension, and humorous B-movie dialogue. RE2 uses all these techniques to great effect.



KNEE-DEEP IN THE DEAD Well, ankle-deep at least. Helping zombies return to their more traditional, nonambulatory dead state is all in a day's work for cop Leon Kennedy.

Twitch and Shout

Most of the gameplay centers on key hunts and puzzles, but along the way there is a lot of zombie slaying to do. The presentation should be familiar to adventure gamers: 3D character models move about an eerie abandoned police station and secret lab.

The models looked great on the console version and have been improved for the PC: Zombies shuffle and twitch toward you, their cleaved torsos clawing across the floor to attack you. Heroes limp and drag their feet as they absorb increasing levels of punishment (although this realistic feature can be a serious pain in the rear when you have to limp clear across a level to get some health).

The fixed camera angles can be a problem: They occasionally get in the way when you're killing zombies—a definite downer since RE2 has more combat than the average adventure game.

One of the features that sets RE2 apart is its use of intertwining plot lines. You can play from the perspective of Claire Redfield (sister of Chris Redfield, the protagonist from the first game) or Leon Kennedy, a rookie cop in the Raccoon City Police Department. After you play through a plot from one character's perspective, you can go through the plot you just finished from the other character's point of view. Some of the decisions that you make the first time through will affect what happens when you play the plot from the other character's viewpoint: You'll see the same rooms, but the puzzles, item distribution, enemies, and side quests will be different. This means the game's two-plot-per-character format yields a total of four plot lines.

For the RE2 hard-core who wore out their console version, the PC edition has something new to offer: Extreme Battle Mode. Here all of the key hunts and puzzles have been thrown out the window, leaving you with a pure zombie-killing action-fest. You get four different characters to choose from (including Chris Redfield), all armed to the teeth with special weaponry. The only other notable bone thrown to PC gamers is a still-image gallery and a Windows desktop theme.

RESIDENT EVIL 2: PLATINUM EDITION holds its own as far as gameplay is concerned, but next to the latest and greatest PC releases it falls a little flat. The title probably won't match the success of the console version, but gamers without PlayStations might still find much to enjoy here. CGW



CHIPPED SHOULDER RE2's high-quality models and animations include dynamic bullet-impact effects like this.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★½☆



PROS: Plays exactly like the console game.

CONS: Plays exactly like the console game.

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 166, 24MB RAM, 260MB hard-drive space.

3D SUPPORT: Direct 3D, Direct Draw.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: None.

Price: $34.95
Publisher: Capcom Entertainment

www.capcom.com



RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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Acclaim
www.acclaim.net

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Going South

SOUTH PARK License Can't Save the Weak Game Behind It

by Thierry Nguyen

Suck on my chocolate salty balls...put 'em in your mouth and suck 'em!" Either you recognized the *South Park* quote or you're flipping to the cover and wondering if you bought the wrong magazine. Relax. You didn't.

South Park is one of those pop-culture phenoms that make companies hunger to snatch the license and whip up a quick game. In this case, unfortunately, the license is better than the game—in both its PC and console versions.

It's Coming Right for Us!

The game's campy premise gives you the feeling of playing a long episode of the TV show. Essentially, a giant comet of evil has landed in South Park and has generated many enemies ready to go on a rampage. The infamous four *South Park* kids must save the town. The game comprises five episodes filled with varying levels, and Chef gives the kids a briefing before each one.

SOUTH PARK perfectly captures the spirit of the show, both visually and aurally. Even though the game is in 3D, characters and settings remain graphically true to their TV roots. The sound is even better: All of the show's actors did the voiceovers, and again, it's a damn good use of the license. While you play the four main kids in the single-player game, the multiplayer mode lets you choose from any and all other characters, each with a set of witty quips.

The enemies are both from the show and created for the game; fans of the show will recognize the killer genetic turkeys, the clones, and the cow-slaughtering aliens.

Finally, the weapons provide an interesting spin on tired, traditional FPS gear. Grenades are replaced with Terrance and Phillip fart dolls, and the infamous sniper rifle is now a chicken that you squeeze to shoot eggs. The best is a multiplayer-only weapon, an Alien Gizmo that forces its victim to dance a little jig, clearing the way for fragging.

Oh My God, They Killed Gameplay!

Despite all the atmosphere, the game seems rushed and is *very* uninspired. The problems start with the level design: Everything looks alike, so you have to pay attention to the arrow signs to get through the linear levels.

There is no real AI to speak of; any difficulty comes from simply stacking the odds. The levels that make up an episode tend to focus on just one or two enemies and throw them at you in hordes. Quantity over quality is the level-design mantra here.

Multiplayer is slightly better, since you have a larger variety of characters/skins. The main problem is character imbalance, due to size. Ike is about the size of a football, while Mr. Mackey's head is as wide as a goalpost. Sure, Ike starts with less health, but with a competent player behind him, he's impossible to hit, while it's impossible to *miss* when aiming at Mr. Mackey.

Graphically, the problems stem from residual N64 and general engine limitations. You'll see the ever-present fog (a bit better here than in the N64 version), seams and cracks on the walls, bad texturing, and a fixed resolution of 640x480, regardless of your 3D card. Another console leftover is the fact that you can save only at the end of every level.

As the big *South Park* fan in the *CGW* office, I found the game disappointing. The only people I can see enjoying it are die-hard fans who don't do much action gaming, so they don't know what they're missing. For the rest of us, though, it's just one more licensing misfire, but with a twist: Instead of a bad game that misuses the license, we just get a bad game that uses the license *well*. Not even Mr. Hankey can save this game. CGW



CRUSH THEM, GIANT ROBO! Enemy design is sorely lacking; the enemies can generally be divided into two groups: grunts and grunt creators. At least these fart-doll weapons are cool.



ARMAGEDDON AT LAST The PC version of SOUTH PARK will let you pit Satan against Jesus, something you can't do in the N64 version.



ON THE TOWN Capturing the look of the show has the unfortunate side effect of generating some lackluster levels, like this straightforward street in South Park.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★½☆☆☆



PROS: Uses the license perfectly, capturing the look, sound, and feel of the show; amusing twist on weapons; great audio commentary depending on which character you choose.

CONS: Bad level and enemy design; nonexistent enemy AI; various visual problems; unbalanced multiplayer characters.

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium II 266, 32MB RAM, 95MB hard-drive space.

3D SUPPORT: 3dfx Glide, Direct3D.

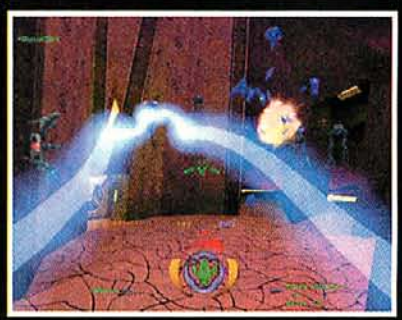
MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: LAN, Internet (2–8 players); modem, serial (2 players); 1 CD per player.

Price: $44.95
Publisher: Acclaim Entertainment
www.acclaim.net

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DESCENT 3

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Interplay

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fanTrum

Dinos in the Mist

The Follow-up to an N64 Hit Hunts for Some Respect

by Tom Price

TUROK 2 must have seemed like a good proposition to Acclaim; based on a popular comic book series, the original TUROK was wildly popular on the N64. But the PC port of the original was somewhat less than impressive, so PC gamers haven't exactly been waiting on pins and needles for TUROK 2: SEEDS OF EVIL. That's too bad, because in spite of some significant faults that keep it out of contention for a place among the HALF-LIFEs of the world, TUROK 2 at least deserves a look.

TUROK 2 begins after the destruction of the Campaigner and the Chronoscepter at the end of TUROK: DINOSAUR HUNTER. This time you are Joshua Fireseed, the new Turok, and you must fight your way through six worlds full of aliens, zombies, and, of course, dinosaurs, defending the energy totems against the Primagen.

Helping you in your quest is Adon, the requisite buxom-babe-with-an-English-accent, who announces all the weapons you pick up—and can't be taken seriously at all once she says "flamethrowah." Too bad, because some of the weapons are quite cool. The aforementioned flamethrower sends out a nicely rendered arc of fire, while the firestorm cannon has a cool triple-spinning animation and a deadly rain of fireballs.

The most gruesome weapon (and therefore my favorite) would have to be the cerebral bore. No, it has nothing to do with William F. Buckley. Instead, it's a brainwave-homing, exploding drill bit. The beastie lucky enough to get one of these locked onto his skull writhes around while the bore whines away like a dentist's drill, spraying blood and gray matter until the bore finally explodes inside the head of the creature, popping it like an overripe melon. Yum!

Unfortunately, technical glitches abound in TUROK 2. The most ridiculous example would have to be the bloodstains. If you kill a monster next to a wall, bloodstains actually hover a few inches above the wall itself, and if you're near a corner, as much as 50 percent of the bloodstain bitmap will hang over the edge, in midair. While these aren't exactly game-stopping bugs, they don't do much to improve the game's overall image.

Also problematic is the fogging, a cheap way of avoiding Z-buffering that's a carryover from the N64. In sniper mode, the fog forms a hard edge instead of a gradual one that makes for pools of gray poi collecting in the nooks and crannies of the structures you're looking at. It's just one more amateurish touch that tarnishes the game.



BORED SILLY Who says games are too gory? The brain-drilling cerebral bore has blood effects that would make Ray Harryhausen proud.

The Lost World

The biggest downside to TUROK 2 has to be the level design. You run around, find the switch, hit the switch, find the door that opened, rescue someone, find the portal, go to the next maze of repetitive bitmaps, and generally operate in a confused state. Further addling is the overlay map, à la DARK FORCES. It's a serious pain trying to watch out for hazards in front of you while playing a game of Lock 'n' Chase at the same time. Worse yet, there is no static map that you can access while paused. What seems like an attempt to be challenging ultimately just makes the game boring.

So if you're thinking about suggesting some TUROK 2 multiplay the next time you're meeting with your QUAKE clan, forget it; they'll laugh you out of the group. However, if your 10-year-old cousin who got that new Celeron for Christmas needs a game to introduce him to first-person shooters, you could do a lot worse than TUROK 2. A whole lot. CGW

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★☆☆



PROS: Better than its predecessor; good weapons; decent AI.

CONS: Poor level design; numerous graphical glitches.

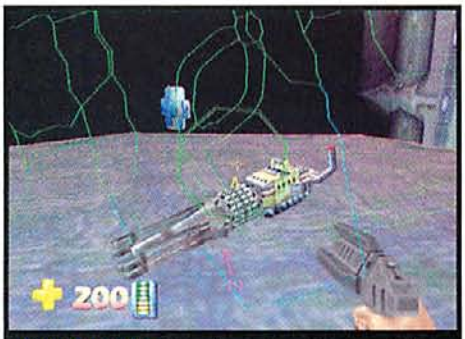
DIFFICULTY: Intermediate.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 200, 32MB RAM, 200MB hard-drive space.

3D SUPPORT: 3Dfx Voodoo 1 or better.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: LAN and Internet (2–16 players); 1 CD per player.

Price: $44.99
Publisher: Acclaim Entertainment
www.acclaim.net



YOU ARE HERE The cheesy overlay map only serves to make the repetitive levels even more difficult to navigate.



YOU'RE REALLY BUGGING ME Reptiles aren't the only critters that are making your life difficult. Bugs, aliens, and other assorted flora and fauna add a lot of variety to the gameplay.

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Extreme G2

★★☆☆☆

Publisher: Acclaim Entertainment
Price: $29.99
www.acclaim.net

For scenery-smacking, speed-filled, oh-my-God-I'm-going-the-wrong-way confusion, EXTREME G2 is the epitome of Bad 21st-Century Motorcycle Gaming.

To be fair, the lightweight physics model is bearable and you get some interesting weapons. Gameplay modes include time trials and a drone-filled arcade thingy that seems a lot like a mobile SPACE INVADERS, but the basic idea here is to blast and race your way through a series of circuits to the "Extreme Contest."

Of course your opponents are trying to do the very same thing, and the challenge often lies in deciding between a clean, fast run or picking up some of the many yet momentum-crippling power-ups littering each course. Upgrade shops and garages aren't part of the equation, though you can choose from several uniquely performing bikes and win even bigger and badder machines as you progress.

Track structure, though at times repetitive, is as wild as I've seen, with loop-the-loops, jumps, and spiraling tunnels pairing with ridiculously high speeds to instill a perpetual sense of impending doom—one that unfortunately detracts from enjoyment.

The game won't let you axis-map analog throttles and brakes, meaning that owners of four-button sticks and wheels must use two buttons for digital speed control while accessing the keyboard for camera views and weapons. Plus, only the N64 version of the game has multiplayer racing—one more reason why EXTREME G2 is best reserved for its original audience: the console crowd. *—Gordon Goble*

Rollcage

★★★☆☆

Publisher: Psygnosis
Price: $49.99
www.psygnosis.com

ROLLCAGE strives to lead the congested combat-racing pack by offering reversible, gravity-defying cars that can ride up walls or along ceilings, yet somehow keep on ticking. Unfortunately, vertical and/or inverted ROLLCAGE driving is a wretched experience, one that'll toy with your equilibrium, screw with vehicle physics, and destroy any hope you had of winning a race.

But if you play it as a right-side-up drive 'n' shoot, it becomes one very attractive affair. ROLLCAGE's intuitive menus, enormous options and settings area, awesome graphics, and skill-testing driving model show that England-based designer ATD (Attention to Detail) really put some work into this one.



The game has some of the most visually impressive weapons and power-ups ever to torture a 3D card, yet each is geared to a specific purpose. Just try pulverizing a building before you've scooted by the plummeting, flaming wreckage or launching a "Leader Missile" when that leader is you and you'll understand.

The spectacular ROLLCAGE world teems with short cuts and unconstrained off-track spaces. Each undulating circuit is crafted to offer solace only to those who can adapt to its peculiarities and take advantage of its hidden rewards. And that's where that car model comes in. Terrifyingly responsive and inordinately powerful at first, ROLLCAGE cars call for a surprisingly modulated, pseudosimulation approach and prove to be a joy to drive once you get the hang of it.

Split-screen multiplayer retards the otherwise smooth frame rate considerably and the game could do with a true cockpit rather then bumper view, but ROLLCAGE is nevertheless annoyingly addictive and a lotta bombastic fun.

Just ignore all that upside-down stuff. *—Gordon Goble*

Wages of Sin

★★★½☆

Publisher: Activision
Price: $29.95
www.activision.com

Mission packs have the dubious history of either reinforcing a bad game or taking a good one to another level. Fortunately, Activision has achieved the latter and come up with a great addition to the shooter SIN. Unlike other mission packs, WAGES OF SIN (WOS) also manages to play off and add to the SIN storyline.

This time Blade is up against a nasty local crime organization called, you guessed it, the Mafia. These baddies have been hiding mutants in the sewers, under the leadership of family boss Gianni Manero. After a band of hapless construction workers accidentally bump into Manero's mutants in the sewers, Blade is called in.

WOS adds 17 new levels to the SIN universe (including multiplayer levels with cool hoverbikes) and seven new weapons. There are also 12 new enemies, plus two rather nasty end bosses.

The AI has also been improved, with enemies consistently trying to evade your attacks. You'll find that this adds an additional bit of zip to the game; it's just not such an easy affair to waste those monsters this time around.

Activision has included an automatic patch to WOS that will upgrade your SIN installation to version 1.03. The patch makes a *really* big difference in terms of performance. The excessively long loading times are history and the action is smoother as well.



WAGES OF SIN is a worthy addition to the original SIN, adding new goodies while rectifying some of the annoying flaws of that predecessor. It's definitely worth checking out if you're an original SIN-ner. *—Jim Lynch*

THE SECOND PLACE CAR DOESN'T GET









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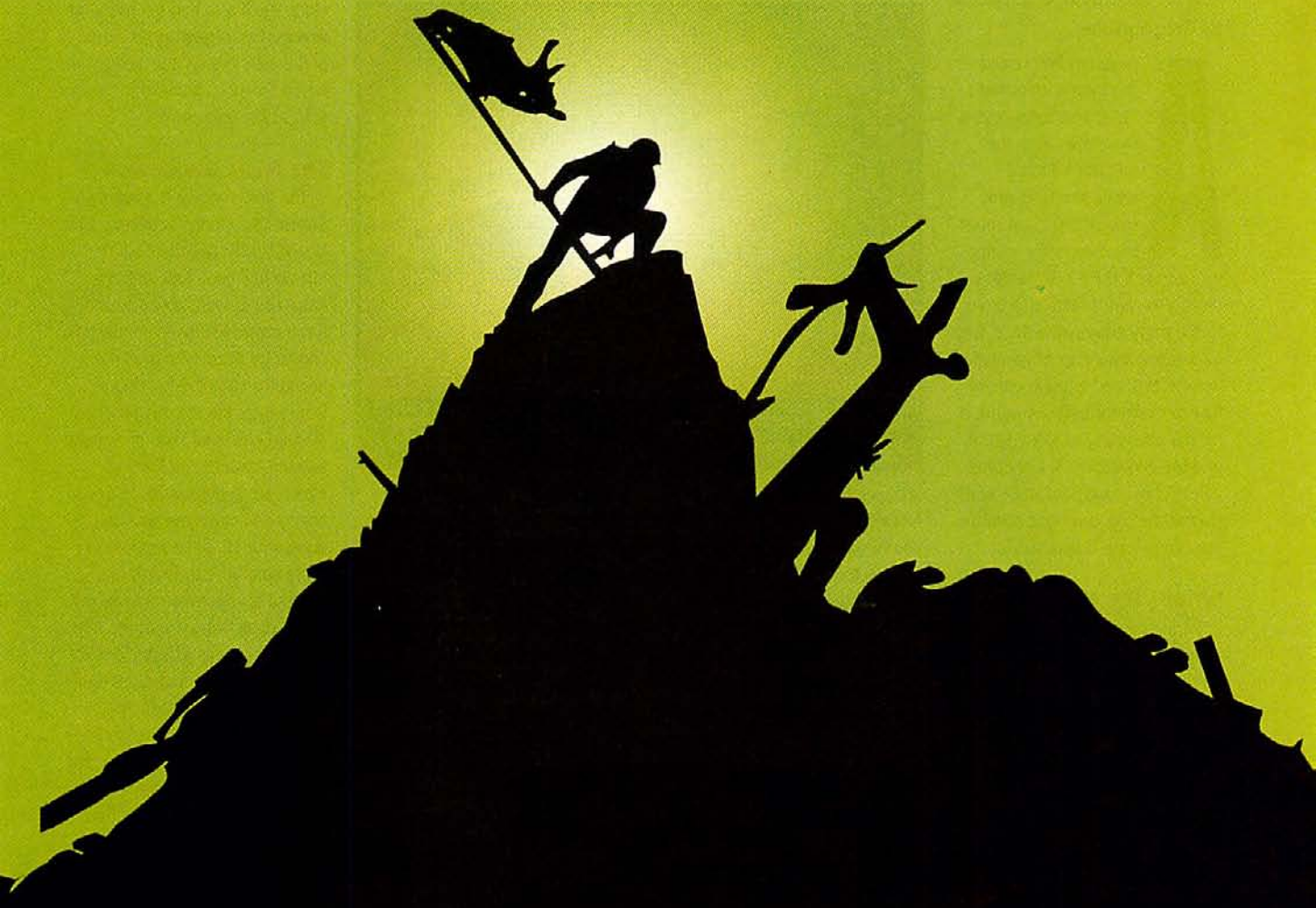
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Robots Rising

EDITORS' CHOICE

The Third Time's the Charm in the War Against the Cybrids

by Greg Fortune

An upstart has seized the throne. Dynamix's STARSIEGE has wrested the crown from the MECHWARRIOR 2 series, the long-time king of the giant robot hill. Where the company's earlier EARTHSIEGE games were also-rans, STARSIEGE comes to the party equipped with a deep back-story, a number of gameplay innovations, and enough unique flair to make for stiff competition for the upcoming HEAVY GEAR II and MECHWARRIOR 3. Only time will tell how long STARSIEGE will stay at the top, but right now, the view from here is spectacular.

What's My Motivation?

Earlier games in this series were hampered by a lack of background. Where MECHWARRIOR had years of development behind it and hundreds of pages of documentation from the paper-based *Battletech* universe, the EARTHSIEGE games had about as much exposition as a *Terminator 2* trailer. This time, Dynamix didn't just write a convenient excuse for you to get into a fight, the company actually laid out the timeline for an entire universe. This ties STARSIEGE in with not only the EARTHSIEGE titles, but with TRIBES as well. The story is presented to you through a very detailed compendium, as well as through news-feeds in the game's interface. The story here isn't just interesting, it's compelling, and I found myself actually taking the time to read through all the news postings between missions.

The story starts with a civil war of sorts, with two brothers, Caanon and Harabec, fighting on opposite sides. This background plays into strategies and even the design of the game's units. The rebels, for instance, use HERCs (this universe's name for its giant robots) based on souped-up construction equipment, and this is reflected in those units' physical designs, capabilities, and paint jobs. Eventually, though, the long-dormant Cybrid threat reemerges, and changes humanity's priorities from conflict to survival.

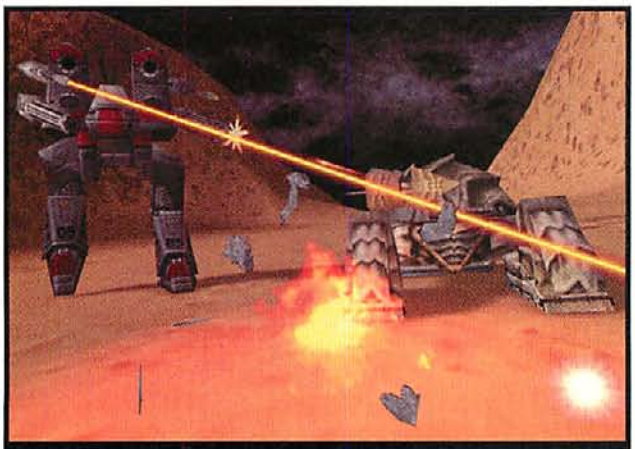
In addition to the built-in back-story, you'll also find fan fiction at **www.starsiegeplayers.com**, and there's even a non–computer-based *Starsiege* game in the works (ETA as yet unknown).

The Next Dimension

The game engine is a beauty. STARSIEGE supports both Glide and OpenGL (officially, the RIVA TNT, but we had good luck with the Rage 128 as well) 3D cards, and has a capable software rendering engine for those who have not joined the cutting-edge club yet. Frame-rates are smooth even on a 3D-card equipped Pentium system, and the textures and lighting effects are beautifully done. Sound effects and music are also well done, with 3D audio support for those who have the hardware.

Input configuration is extremely detailed, allowing you to reconfigure every command in the game. There's even drag-and-drop reconfiguration of your Heads-Up Display layout. My control setup—rudder pedals, CH Pro Throttle, and mouse—was easy to configure to work with the game, and it functioned flawlessly.

The game's interface is well designed, with little jumping around necessary. Configuration can be done from the main menus,



HOW ARTICULATE Despite the lack of torso twist, articulated weapons still give the HERCs a decent field of fire.



NOTE THE DIFFERENCE in scale between the tanks and the larger vehicles. Don't worry, the tanks give as good as they receive.



NICE DIGS Buildings look as good as vehicles in this game.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★½



PROS: Lots of gameplay innovations, best giant robot game yet.

CONS: Canned wingman communications.

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 166 (with 3D card, P200 without), 32MB RAM, 299MB hard disk space.

3D SUPPORT: 3Dfx Glide, OpenGL.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: Modem, LAN (IPX), Internet (TCP/IP); number of players limited only by bandwidth.

Price: $49.95
Publisher: Dynamix (Sierra)

www.starsiege.com

and from the cockpit of your HERC as well—a very nice touch. Several times I needed to map a command I had left out of my custom configuration while inside a mission and was able to do so easily.

Customization isn't limited to controls—multiplayer fans will appreciate the ability to import your own custom skins, squad insignia, and character portraits for use in the game.



BOOM BABY BOOM This Cybrid just learned the meaning of teamwork, the hard way.

A Plot Twist

One design decision that worried MECHWARRIOR fans was the elimination of torso-twisting from the HERCs. The only vehicles that support rotating gun platforms are tanks, which are fast and small, but have no shields. At first, my predisposition to torso twists as the basis for a set of strategies caused me some grief. I was determined, however, not to damn this game based on my own prejudices. Eventually, I was able to adapt my tactics to the targeting pointer-based interface and had a blast piloting both the HERCs and the tanks.

If you must swivel, though, there's always the tank. I'll admit I still have a tendency to take Harabec's Predator tank into the field more often than not, as old habits are really hard to break and this tank is really cool. It's a real tribute to the design team that I can be as successful from the turret of a tank as I am from the cockpit of a HERC.



OUCH! HOT! HOT! Dynamic lighting effects spruce up the game nicely. Here we see the best way to smoke a Glitch.

The missions in STARSIEGE are a definite highlight. There are 34 single-player missions, split between the human and Cybrid campaigns. Add to that the training and multiplayer games, and you've got more than 50 distinct missions to work through. Several of the missions I found myself playing repeatedly just to play out "what if" scenarios—they're that good. The best thing about the missions is that, while they are scripted and not dynamic, you never feel like you're on an endless series of combat patrols. Each mission has distinct objectives that often change midstream, and they flow together very nicely. Not once during all the countless hours I played STARSIEGE did I think to myself, "Great, another canned mission." Dynamix plans to release a mission editor eventually, although they're still working out the details on how that will happen.

The game has too many nice touches to mention them all. One example: Sitting in the cockpit of your HERC, watching Cybrid landing pods rain from the sky, you can feel the despair of knowing that an unstoppable force is bent on your destruction. The Cybrid units look decidedly alien and very menacing, and they are even more fun to pilot than destroy. The new cloaking devices, with their *Predator*-style shimmering effect, are also very cool, and add a whole new dimension to the battlefield tactics. Like a ghost, you can now slip in and out of the enemy formations wreaking havoc at will.

There numerous other gizmos to load into your vehicles, like ECM units, extra capacitors, sensors, and so on. All of this variety means that there's little chance that you won't be able to configure a vehicle to work with your fighting style.



HEY, TAXI! STARSIEGE will let you customize your HERC to taste, regardless of how odd that taste may be.

Hate Your Friends

Multiplayer games are also supported using TCP/IP, IPX, or modem. While there was speculation that STARSIEGE would work in multiplayer games with STARSIEGE: TRIBES, that isn't the case. Deathmatch and team-play games are supported, with two of the most notable variations being Capture the Flag and the amusing STARSIEGE Football. Dynamix provides a free Internet-based matchmaking hub, and if you're in the mood for something a little more private, you can set up your own server. Server setup is absolutely painless, and if you have a spare machine, you can use the included nongraphical dedicated server process, which allows many more players in a game.

While STARSIEGE is a very solid effort in today's world of patch-to-work games, it's not glitch-free. AI units sometimes get stuck on objects, which causes them to stand in place, acting like a dog getting its belly scratched. Once time, I actually blew the feet of a unit I was sent to rescue because she wouldn't move to the pickup point. This was after I had destroyed all the enemy units in the area *by myself*, which made for a particularly painful do-over. Also, don't be too quick to reconfigure your controls. The training missions use the default key configuration and ignore any custom setup you've done, preventing you from practicing the controls you'll be using in combat while you're learning.

The annoyances I found were all pretty minor, and STARSIEGE is great fun to play. I didn't find anything that would keep this off anyone's play list, and I found a whole lot to like. It looks like the former also-ran is definitely now the one to beat. CGW

Star Links

STARSIEGE players will want to check out the following sites for gameplay tips, the latest news on enhancements, online squads, and even fan fiction.

www.starsiege.com
Dynamix's official STARSIEGE Web site.

www.starsiegeplayers.com
The official STARSIEGE players' site, with message boards and more.

www.planetstarsiege.com
Perhaps the most thorough site for news, strategies, add-ons, and links to all things STARSIEGE.

www.datumplane.com Another top-notch news, information, and squad site.

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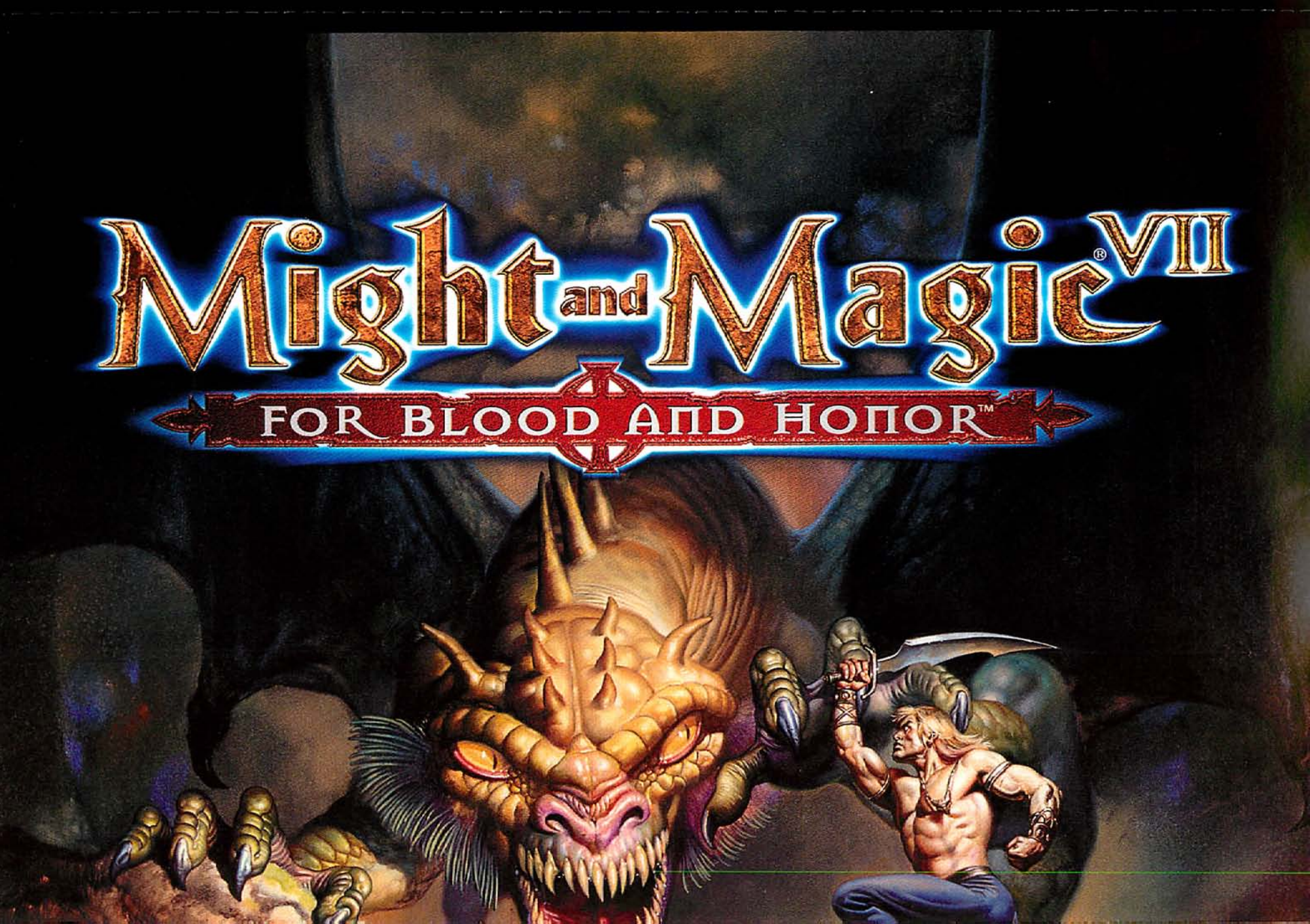
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Revoltingly Bad

Start This NASCAR Revolution Without Us

by Scott A. May

A stock-car racing game for the simulation-impaired, NASCAR REVOLUTION offers arcade action for casual drivers, with variety and flash galore. But you'll need an industrial-strength PC just to drag this beast out of the pits. Again, Electronic Arts has used Stormfront Studios, the developer that dumbed-down the IndyCar experience in ANDRETTI RACING. That game was laughably simplistic, but at least it screamed and was a blast to play. No such luck with NASCAR REVOLUTION, a game that promises not to tax your intellect or skill yet puts your hardware through living hell.

All That Glitters

At surface level, where even the dullest games manage to shine, this one sports some mighty impressive features. You get a whopping 17 accurately modeled real-world tracks—mostly oval variations, with two road courses—that include Atlanta, Bristol, Indianapolis, Michigan, Richmond, Talladega, and Watkins Glen. Three courses also offer night racing, which can be a kick. Further, the game lets you test your mettle against 31 of NASCAR's brightest active drivers, including Jeff Gordon, Dale Earnhardt, Rusty Wallace, Ted Musgrave, Bill Elliott, Dale Jarrett, and Hut Stricklin. You can also race against such legends of the tarmac as Cale Yarborough, Richard Petty, and Bobby Allison. They are all empowered with what Stormfront calls Thunder AI, which certainly *sounds* wicked.

Other potential goodies include a bevy of shop adjustments, such as wedge, downforce, gear ratio, fuel load, steering lock, weight distribution, shocks, and wheel cambers. All this from a game that pretends not to care about such details. Thanks to slipshod performance issues, neither do we. Luckily, most adjustments have no effect on the track.

In spite of 3D accelerator requirements, the game's graphics are a mixed bag. I loved the detailed car skins, and the transparency and windshield reflection effects are dazzling. On the other hand, visual sloppiness abounds, including square car shadows and a fair amount of polygon clipping.

The game supports a wide range of controllers, from gamepads to force-feedback steering wheels. Too bad the actual in-game controls are so sluggish. But it does take your mind off the stupefyingly unrealistic physics model. You know, the one that lets you take any corner, at any speed, from any *racing line*, with virtually identical results. Or that causes cars to stick—not bounce—when they hit the wall. The game can be set to either realistic or arcade modes, but both feel about the same.



IT'S THE PITS NASCAR REVOLUTION's eye candy for the arcade crowd includes motion-capture pit crews who work feverishly to your specifications.



PICTURE PERFECT Graphically stunning in freeze frame, NASCAR REVOLUTION loses most of its appeal when you set it in motion, unless you've got a killer gaming rig.

Pony Up Some Horsepower

EA Sports promises this game will push your hardware to its limits, and it will, but not in a good way. Despite a minimum system requirement of a Pentium 200, the game was sluggish as hell on my trusty old P233 MMX, with 64MB RAM and 12MB Monster 3D II. So I tossed it on a PII300, with surprisingly similar results. Turning down the eye candy helps, but visual flash is the game's only redeeming feature; without it, all we have are boxy graphics and a pathetic driving model. If you're determined to stick with this game, my suggestion is to use the Direct3D rendering option, in which you'll lose graphic glitter but gain a consistently playable frame-rate.

As you'd expect, the game's multiplayer performance is quite frightening. There's no Internet play, for obvious reasons, and even a direct serial cable (null modem) connection begins to shudder when more than four cars share the asphalt. LAN play fares best, but again, for the best performance, limit the total number of drivers in a single race.

I understand the market EA and Stormfront were aiming for with NASCAR REVOLUTION. What I don't get is how they managed to miss the mark so badly. The only revolution this game might incite will be at the return counter of your local software store. CGW

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★½☆☆☆



PROS: Killer car graphics; large selection of real-world tracks and drivers; decent garage mechanics; good sound effects.

CONS: Horrific frame-rates, even on fast systems; even worse multiplayer performance; lousy physics model; stiff controls.

DIFFICULTY: Easy.

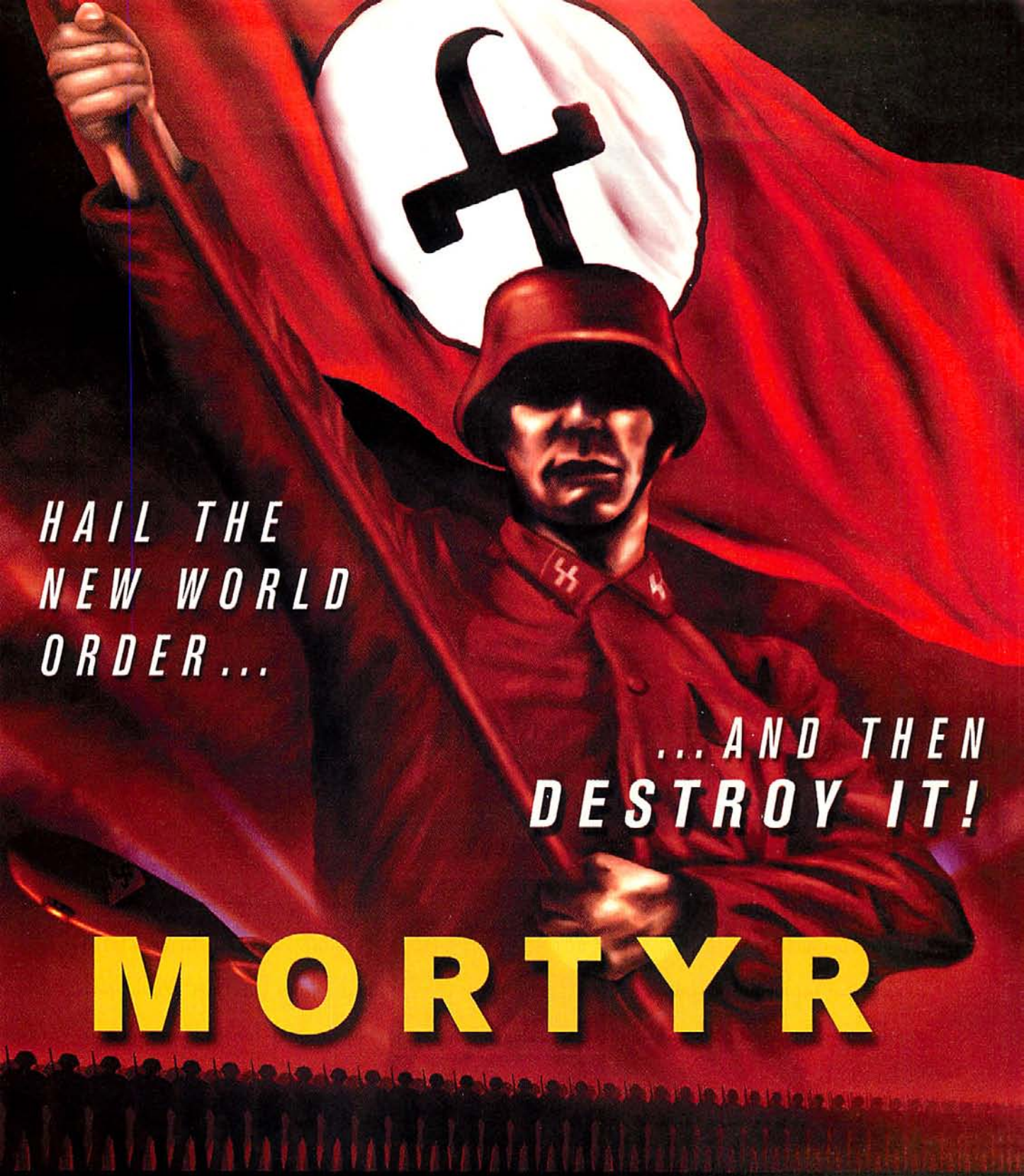
REQUIREMENTS: 200MHz or faster PC (Pentium, Cyrix 6x86, or AMD K6), 32MB RAM, 430MB hard-drive space.

3D SUPPORT: 3dfx (Voodoo, Voodoo Rush, Voodoo^2, and Banshee); Intel I740, nVidia TNT and Riva 128, ATI Rage 128, S3 Savage 3D, Rendition Verite 2200, Direct3D.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: IPX network (2–8 players), modem and serial (2 players); 1 CD per player.

Price: $49.95
Publisher: Electronic Arts

www.easports.com





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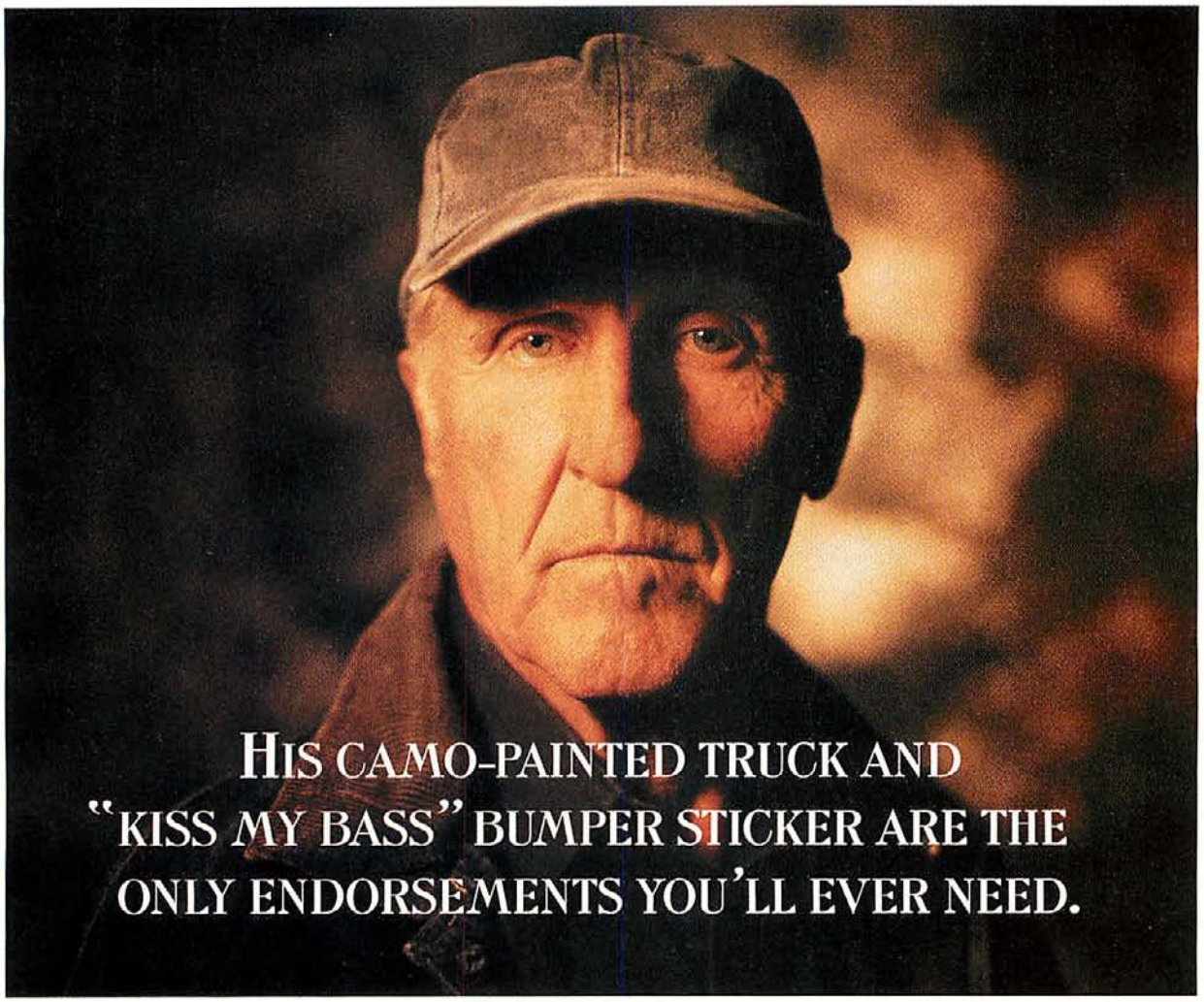


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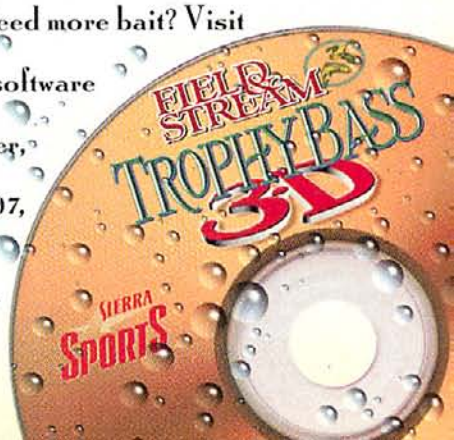




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Hog Heaven

This Racer Boasts Challenges and Thrills in All the Right Places

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD EDITORS' CHOICE

by Gordon Goble

There are games and there are classics, and in PC racing we are fortunate to have had our fair share of the latter. But whoever said a landmark racing game had to ride on four tires certainly didn't count on the latest release from the recently prolific racing stables of Electronic Arts.

Designed by Italian-based game developer Milestone (SCREAMER), SUPERBIKE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP is an unexpectedly remarkable world-class presentation of world-class motorcycle racing. It's so good that it gracefully renders its only true competition—Intense Entertainment's sound-alike SUPERBIKE WORLD CHAMPIONS—darned near forgettable.



GET ME OFF THIS CRAZY THING! The view from SUPERBIKE's first-person camera, a truly frightening perspective.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★★



PROS: Killer graphics; impressive physics, racing options; great audio.

CONS: Hefty system requirements; slow track loading; no crash damage or injuries.

DIFFICULTY: Advanced.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 233, 8MB RAM, 402MB hard-disk space, 8x CD-ROM drive.

3D SUPPORT: Direct3D-compatible card with 8MB RAM.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: Modem, serial cable (2 players), IPX or TCP/IP (2–8 players); 1 CD per network game.

Price: $49.95
Publisher: EA Sports

www.easports.com

A New Standard in Racing

With 12 real-world Superbike courses and an overflowing roster of real riders, bikes, and sponsors, this game is far more authentic than Intense Entertainment's candidate. With hauntingly photorealistic graphics that surpass those of Ubi Soft's F1 RACING SIMULATION, it is a visual masterstroke. And with a demanding and complex physics model, it challenges gamers like no other bike-racing game ever has.

But should you think you'll need a license in Simology just to get upright, fear not. SUPERBIKE is two, two, two games in one. For the casual crowd, it's a blatantly arcade affair with simplified riding and enough stereotypical coin-op menu trappings to look like an explosion at a Sega factory. The second game-within-a-game, however, is the real reason SUPERBIKE will make everyone's short list for racing game of the year.

Let me put it this way—I spent my first two hours perfecting a single lap at Italy's Monza, enjoying every subtle moment and reminiscing fondly about my earliest experiences with MicroProse's GRAND PRIX II. Make no mistake, with its multitude of difficulty and realism options opened, SUPERBIKE is at least that involving and perhaps even more difficult.

First and foremost, there is little doubt you are astride a tenuous, temperamental motorcycle, one that differs from manufacturer to manufacturer. Accelerate too quickly and you'll wheelie and flip; brake too sharply on a downhill slope and you'll bring the rear wheel up and potentially take a header over the handlebars. Along the way, SUPERBIKE forces you to take an ultrasmooth approach and smart racing lines, with the believable crash-avoidance techniques and uncanny behavior of the AI competition an added bonus.

Should you go for a spill, however, it's a wild show to be sure, with detached riders doing their best rag-doll impersonations, and bikes tumbling and skidding to a stop. Sadly, crash-damaged bikes and racers are not part of the equation, though at 100 percent realism you will have to run back to your overturned mount and manually get it pointed back in the right direction again before you can continue!

Looking Good

As impressive as the SUPERBIKE ride is, the game's graphics are even more so. Granted, you have to exceed the *recommended* system requirements to experience its true glory while maintaining a workable frame-rate; but if you do it's a knockout show, with brilliant detail, shadows, lighting, tire smoke, and a gorgeous rendering process that creates unbelievable, almost TV-like images.

It's not just the polish that shines—it's what's underneath, too. SUPERBIKE features a dozen of the finest real-life circuits ever seen in a sim. The game also never lets you forget that each rider is somewhat independent of his machine. You can see this best exemplified in the first-person perspective, in which the camera view actually bobs about in accordance with the position of the rider's head, not the handlebars. I, however, preferred the situational awareness of the third-person chase view.

A full garage facility and seemingly accurate telemetry readings will help you tune your beast, and the game offers several modes of play from preseason practice through a full championship (with real-time qualification sessions) and several multiplayer options.

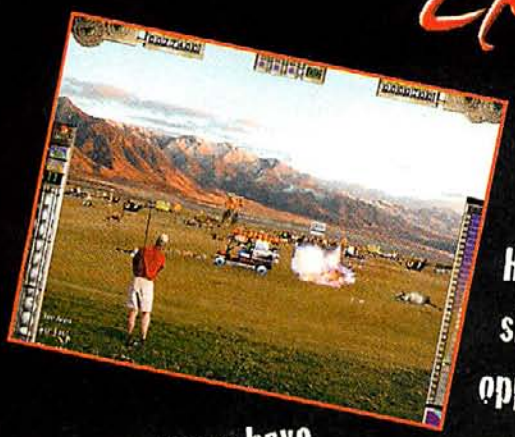
SUPERBIKE doesn't pull any punches in the audio department either, superbly showcasing the unique engine notes of each of the five bike types on display and positioning the sound wonderfully across the stereo spectrum. Unfortunately, the game slowly unloads and reloads each track with every new session. Of course, this complaint pales against all that is right with the game.

SUPERBIKE succeeds on many levels, not the least of which is that it becomes more enjoyable the longer you play and the better you get. And yes, serious racers will continue to improve as their experience, ability and knowledge increase—the true mark of a top-notch sim. CGW

THIS AIN'T NO SKINS GAME.



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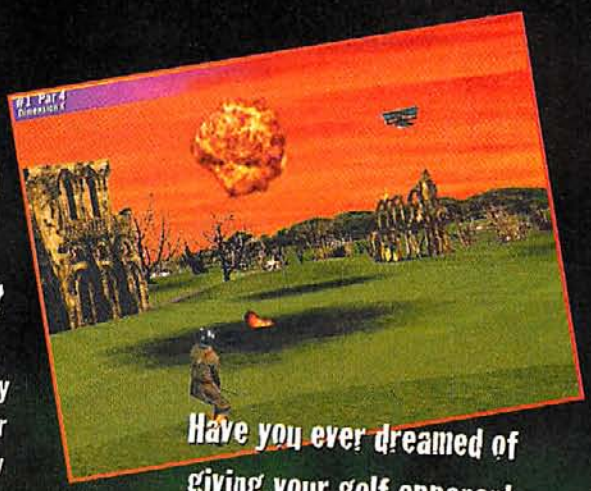
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Here on Mulligan's Isle

MS GOLF 1999 EDITION Is a Great Game but Only a Slight Upgrade

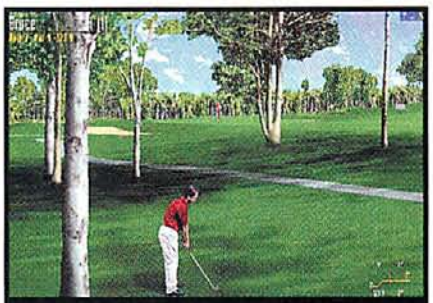
by Scott A. May

It seems like only yesterday that I was heaping high praise on MICROSOFT GOLF 1998 and applauding the veteran franchise for finally coming into its own. Wait a minute—that *was* yesterday. Well, almost. And now, a scant six months or so after the release of GOLF 98, Microsoft and Friendly Software are offering GOLF 1999 EDITION, an ever-so-slight remake of last year's model.

Packed with only three new courses and a few cosmetic changes, this release is basically an upgrade. In fact, Microsoft could easily have gotten by with a downloadable patch and expansion disc. Thankfully, a $30 mail-in rebate for owners of GOLF 98 takes the sting out of paying full price for a game you more or less already have. Owners of previous MS GOLF products also qualify for a $10 rebate, which, all things considered, might be an even better deal.



THIS PERFECT WORLD As with many of today's top golf sims, the graphics in MS GOLF 99 are so polished that they've become somewhat sterile and lifeless.



GIMME VARIETY Seven 18-hole courses are available for play in MS GOLF 99, including three new links and four returning championship greens.

With an engine licensed from Access Software, MS GOLF began as merely a watered-down version of LINKS, contractually crippled to always be one step behind the Carver mother lode. And the game has cowered in the shadows ever since. It wasn't bad; it just wasn't good—as if it had no soul.

A Bastard No More

Last year Microsoft finally ponied up the dough to hire Ohio-based Friendly Software to do an original, stem-to-stern makeover of the feeble franchise. Driven by an improved version of Friendly's GREG NORMAN game engine, a sleek interface, and knockout graphics, GOLF 98 rose to the ranks of the genre's top contenders, alongside its estranged parent.

The good news is, GOLF 99 delivers three new 18-hole courses—Donald Ross Memorial, Eagle Heights, and Medallist Golf Club. They join four holdovers from last year—Teeth of the Dog, the Links at Casa de Campo, Bay Harbor, and the Preserve 9—for a total of 117 holes. That's a heap o' holes, which is nice, because unlike LINKS or JACK NICKLAUS GOLF, in GOLF 99 you can't import courses from older versions of the game.

The bad news isn't really bad; it's just disappointing: Virtually nothing else about the game has changed. Microsoft claims that a few aspects of gameplay have been tweaked, like chipping dynamics, but after playing for three weeks—and comparing it back-to-back with GOLF 98—I could find few discernible differences. Again, this isn't necessarily a bad thing. It just makes you wonder why Microsoft didn't wait to release a bona fide sequel.

Same Old, Still Good

Highlights of returning features include excellent customization of your gaming environment, including player strength, club distance, ball size and type, pin placement, and weather conditions. Up to four players can compete in one of five game types—Stroke, Match Play, Skins, Bingo-Bango-Bongo, and Scramble.

The availability of four swing modes assures that players of almost any skill level (real or imagined) can participate, from club lawyers to ball scrubbers. There are the standard dual- and tri-click mouse-button modes; an automated sim swing that virtually eliminates player input (not to mention all the fun); and Natural Swing, in which backswing and ball strikes are controlled entirely by mouse movement. This last method is touchy and difficult to master, to say the least, and not performed in realtime. Stick to the traditional click-and-twitch instead.

MS GOLF 99 doesn't support 3D video acceleration, but it doesn't need to. In terms of photorealism, the game element that everyone seems to clamor for, the graphics here can toe the line with any competitor, using a combination of prerendered backdrops and video-captured golfer animations. Screen redraws are zippy, with multiple views to choose from. Truth be told, as in many of today's top golf sims, the landscapes here are so buffed and polished that they're somewhat cold and lifeless, as if you're playing inside a presentation slide show. Be careful what you wish for, people.

Redundant features and the lack of viable improvements make MICROSOFT GOLF 1999 EDITION best suited for fans who don't already own GOLF 98. For the rest of us, the countdown to GOLF 2000 is still ticking. CGW

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★☆☆



PROS: Improved ball physics; ultra-clean interface; attractive graphics; in-depth player customization; four swing modes.

CONS: Gameplay not appreciably better than last edition; lacks printed manual; no 3D hardware support.

DIFFICULTY: Easy.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 90, 16MB RAM, 55MB hard-drive space.

3D SUPPORT: None.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: Modem (2 players), IPX or TCP/IP (2–4 players); 1 CD per player.

Price: $44.95
Publisher: Microsoft

www.microsoft.com/games

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GAMESPOT

DRESSED FOR SUCCESS



Rather than let a hero load up with every artifact in the game, HEROES III uses a paper doll model to limit how many artifacts a hero can use at once, forcing you to make strategic decisions.

UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT



The addition of sprawling subterranean areas in the adventure section of the game effectively doubles the size of many of the maps.

being able to gain a bonus when commanding certain troops—and there are lots of new abilities to acquire as well. One new ability, tactics, lets heroes move their forces within a limited range immediately prior to a battle—it's great for offense-minded heroes, letting them move ranged units into prime positions while cutting down the distance melee units have to travel.

All this makes for a game that is mind-boggling in its depth, and the designers deserve praise for adding so much while managing to dodge the paralyzing feature bloat that could have easily sunk the title. Unfortunately, they also deserve a slap on the wrist for a tutorial that requires players to either print out a huge manual or constantly toggle between the game and a separate text file.

Storyteller Theatre

HOMMIII breaks from its predecessors in its campaign mode. Instead of a pair of linear campaigns with a few branches, the campaign is broken up into six minicampaigns of three to four scenarios apiece. While this lets the game tell a more interesting story, fans of the series will probably miss the either/or branches of HEROES II that rewarded them for taking on more challenging scenarios. The campaign mode's greatest drawback is that gamers can't load individual scenarios from any completed minicampaign—you have to save each scenario at its start to replay it. While the campaign game is loaded with more than 20 great, challenging scenarios featuring a variety of goals—including wiping out enemies, seizing specific towns, escort missions, and more—they're unevenly paced, with one cruelly hard mission finishing up the relatively easy second campaign (see sidebar for tips on beating this scenario) before lapsing into easy mode for the next campaign.

Fortunately, the game ships with an enormous number of mostly customizable single scenarios, giving the game remarkable replayability, while the map editor that's included ensures that tons of user-created maps will be available online.

HOMMIII has improved its multiplayer play, allowing for timed turns and letting strategists scan the map and their towns during an opponent's turn; while you can't issue orders during your enemy's turn, at least it's better than just staring at your monitor. A problem with DirectPlay makes Internet HOMMIII a sluggish experience, but that should be corrected in an upcoming patch.

Ultimately, the rewards of HEROES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC III far outweigh its few drawbacks. Hopefully most of those shortcomings will be patched, but even as it stands now HOMMIII is a game that strategy fans should absolutely be playing. CGW



Killing Kendal and Capturing Steadwick

You'll need two waves of enormous armies to take out General Kendal, who guards Steadwick. The key to this limited-time scenario is to grab the dragon generator in the lower-right corner of the subterranean level. Load your best hero with units and then seize the generator before the end of the first week. Build up your dungeon town first, initially choosing upgrades aimed at creating black dragons. Above ground, secure resources quickly and don't waste any units in fights with creatures who want to flee. Raise gold any way possible. By the second month, break through the southern magic-inhibiting garrison, flagging the griffin towers and the lone gold mine. Load up your best heroes and then attack, using your first hero to take out Kendal's biggest stack and mopping up with your dragon-laden hero.



Heroism 101

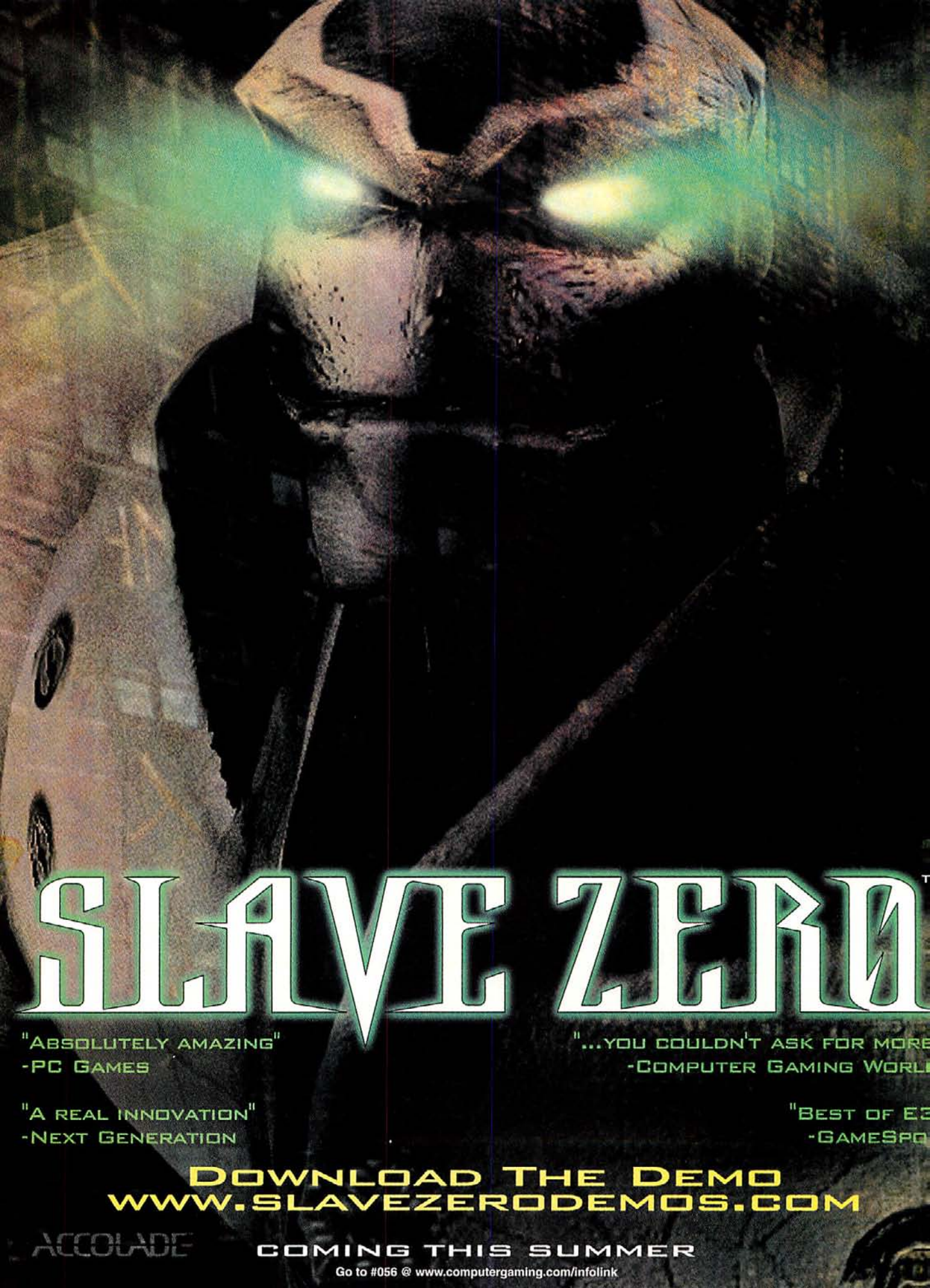
To protect your more valuable units, let your weakest creatures attack tough enemies first so they absorb the counterstrike.

The AI almost always focuses its attack on the largest group of units, so build up hordes of cheap cannon-fodder units to occupy enemies while your stronger armies pound on them. For inferno heroes, bait enemies with imps so that magogs can hurl fireballs without damaging more-expensive units.

Build marketplaces early. Almost every map is scarce in some resource (generally gold), so you'll need to convert resources early and often.

Just because you start a scenario with two towns doesn't mean you need two heroes. Instead, use one town as your central production point while building up only the income-generating aspects of the second town. With one well-equipped hero you'll be able to win crucial early battles for resources that will eventually make additional heroes affordable and effective.

Use your units' special abilities. For example, since cavaliers and champions get 5 percent extra damage for every hex traveled, they should always charge before an attack, even if it means just circling an enemy that's already next to them.



Go to #056 @ www.computergaming.com/infolink

Imperialism with a Dash of Civ

Explore a Brave New World Set in a Bold New Era

by Loyd Case

Elizabeth I was lucky. If it hadn't been for an errant storm and the plucky courage of Sir Francis Drake and a few bold Englishmen, we might all be speaking Spanish today.

Playing IMPERIALISM II really drives this point home. Toward the end of one game, I found myself locked in a life-and-death struggle with Spanish invaders on English soil. The battle seesawed back and forth for some time, but ultimately I was ignominiously defeated. If only I'd had my own Drake.



A NEW-SCHOOL OLD SCHOOL At first glance, IMPERIALISM II looks like an old-school title. But the 2D playing surface is actually fairly detailed.

It's the Same, but Different

As you might guess by the name, IMPERIALISM II is the successor to SSI's original turn-based empire builder. The original was set in an era—roughly the 19th or 20th century—when empires had already been established in the New World, and the objective was to become the world's first real superpower. IMPERIALISM II is set in an earlier time in which there is a completely undiscovered New World—a world with plenty of secrets to be uncovered by adventure- and glory-seeking explorers. A highly engaging game, IMPERIALISM II certainly has similarities to the original—especially in terms of interface—but there are some significant differences, too.

You'll notice the first difference right off the bat: The game map is hidden when you begin play. This hidden area is the undiscovered country, and it's up to you to send out explorers, sailors, and merchants to reap riches, resources, and living space for your country. You can play on a random map or, if you're historically inclined, one that reflects realistic geography.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★☆



PROS: Intelligent AI and hidden new world make for an interesting blend of IMPERIALISM and CIV II.

CONS: The game is a little dry; some audio glitches.

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 200, 32MB RAM, 110MB hard-drive space.

3D SUPPORT: None.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: IPX, modem (2–6 players); 1 CD per player.

Price: $49.95
Publisher: SSI

www.ssionline.com



ONE-MINUTE WONDER Combat in IMPERIALISM II may not be sophisticated, but it works.

If We Build It, They Will Come

IMPERIALISM II is a game of strategy, exploration, resource management, and combat. When you start a game, you can configure not only difficulty levels but also a host of other parameters. If you like a more building-oriented style of game, you can set that up. If you want lots of combat, no problem.

The graphics are solid-looking, in a classical kind of way, but they're mostly static, with a few minor animations. One nice touch is the zoom-out mode, which resembles an old parchment map.

You begin the game with three land units and three carracks (small cargo ships). As in the original game, movement is abstracted. Except when building roads or railroads, you place your units where you want them, without worrying about paths and terrain. (I can imagine King Philip pointing to a location on the map and suggesting to Magellan: "Go there.")

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Windows® 95/98 CD-ROM

SSI

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TREE-HUGGIN' NEW WORLDER IMPERIALISM II's new tech tree allows you to highlight a desired research goal and then work toward the smaller advancements that help you achieve that goal.

The nations that make up your world consist of six major powers and a handful of minor powers. You win by gaining control over 32 provinces in the Old World. While most of your acquisitions will be achieved the good-old fashioned way, through combat, diplomacy is also a major factor.

Setting up trade pacts, embassies, and alliances is a key part of IMPERIALISM II's diplomatic game. You cajole minor powers to join your empire with careful application of trade subsidies and outright bribes, and you attempt to play different factions off each other. This aspect of the game is very similar to the original, but the computer opponents handle things better than before. Get a province taken away from you by force, and suddenly your friends will start to give you the cold shoulder. Fend off an invader, and all of a sudden you're everybody's best buddy. At times, its eerie just how much the AI mimics real life—or the fourth grade.

Here Be Dragons

Where this version of IMPERIALISM diverges from the original is in its aforementioned focus on discovering the New World, which adds an extra dimension of strategic depth to the game. To win, you have to capture provinces in the Old World. But you'll never get enough money and resources to do that without commandeering provinces in the New World. More than a few times, I got carried away with uncovering hidden lands and setting up shop there only to discover late in the game that I'd fallen behind because I didn't pay enough attention to expanding my old-world empire. If you act like the Dutch did historically, you'll end up with the same results they did: You'll get pretty rich but become an also-ran in the game of power.

As you uncover the New World, you'll come across a new set of minor powers, which creates an interesting choice: Do you just roll in and suppress the natives, or do you try to deal with them in a more civilized manner? (Hint: Even if you're playing in a more peaceful style, you can lock out the other powers simply by buying a piece of land in the new country. The AI can't come in after that unless they declare war on you.)

The game requires you to balance two objectives. First, there's the dance between managing your new acquisitions and paying attention to your homeland. Then there's the resource ballet. The basic resources needed to feed and clothe your subjects lie mostly in your own domain, but the real wealth-generating resources, such as spices, diamonds, and gold, lie in the unexplored regions. In addition, luxuries needed to create a productive middle class, like tobacco, sugar, and furs, also lie in the New World. The difficulty is this: Just when you think you've gotten a handle on food, you find yourself running low on lumber and iron. You frantically build up those resources, only to find that you don't have enough clothing to recruit new laborers.

It gets more challenging the further you get into the game, as your citizens move up the economic chain. Each new class of worker is significantly more productive but demands a new type of luxury to *stay* productive.

It all sounds a little dry on the surface, but it's incredibly addictive. And if it does prove too much for you, you can always assign the AI to handle some of the micromanagement.

It's the AI, Stupid

IMPERIALISM II boasts one of the stronger AI's I've seen. Aggressive and smart, the computer opponents will send in a lone cavalryman to scout out your position, then return later with a much stronger force. The AI also does a good job of building a mix of units that can give you fits on offense or defense.

The strategic AI is no slouch, either, though it tends to be quite aggressive. For example, even if you configure the game to be peaceful and builder-oriented (rather than centered around combat), the AI tends to send in the troops to take over minor New-World countries.

IMPERIALISM II is one of those rare games that actually adhere to the truism that gameplay is the first priority. It's not flashy, but as you dig into it you find that it's deep, addictive, and challenging. And there's no 3D accelerator or Pentium II required. This is one title that will live on my hard drive for quite some time. CGW



TABLOID JOURNALISM During every turn, the town crier will notify you about the biggest goings-on in the world.

Un-Civil War

The JULIUS CAESAR Engine Can't Handle Rifled Muskets

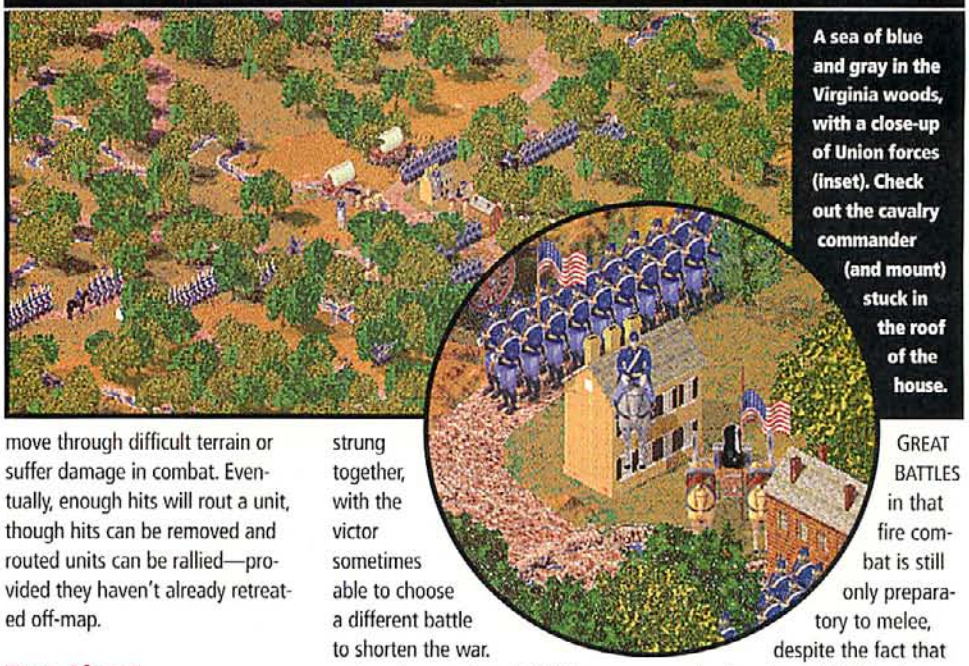
by Jim Cobb

The first thing you need to know about NORTH VS. SOUTH (NVS) is that it uses the acclaimed GREAT BATTLES OF JULIUS CAESAR engine, which was designed to simulate ancient tactical combat. Problem is, a few things intervened between the times of Julius Caesar and Robert E. Lee—things like gunpowder, the disappearance of personal armor, and the decline of shock combat. Even so, the units of NVS resemble their ancient counterparts in their ratings for morale, strength, weapons type, range, and the like.

The units take up either one or two 330-yard hexes. Each turn represents basically an hour, and in that time, units can be ordered to move, turn, wheel, and change formation (column/line, mounted/unmounted, or limbered/unlimbered) individually or, if their commander is capable, in groups.

Units take cohesion hits (à la GREAT BATTLES) whenever they move through difficult terrain or suffer damage in combat. Eventually, enough hits will rout a unit, though hits can be removed and routed units can be rallied—provided they haven't already retreated off-map.

Lost in the Wilderness



A sea of blue and gray in the Virginia woods, with a close-up of Union forces (inset). Check out the cavalry commander (and mount) stuck in the roof of the house.

Turn About

Also as in GREAT BATTLES, command is at the heart of NVS. Commanders have command ranges and initiative ratings, which equal the number of orders they can give to units; group movements, if successful, use up that leader's allotted orders. The side whose commanders have the higher initiative ratings tends to go first and most often. The twist in NVS is that commands come from army commanders to corps commanders down to division level. The corps commanders can either spread orders between their subordinate division commanders or drive a crucial division multiple times at the risk of sustaining hits for the additional movement.

NVS applies this system to 10 engagements between the Union Army of the Potomac and the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia. Each engagement has an historical setting and up to six "what if" variants. The campaign game has all 10 engagements strung together, with the victor sometimes able to choose a different battle to shorten the war.

Sounds great, but NVS fails to deliver. The graphics, for example, aren't even up to the standard of the GREAT BATTLES series. Why, with the colorful assortment of kepis, butternuts, Zoauves, and other uniforms that colorfully filled the Civil War battlefield, are we subjected to a monotonous procession of blue and gray ranks? The terrain can conceal corps and division commands, causing you to waste time searching for them with the slow scrolling and touchy fly-by window. The animation for battle is unintentionally funny when the defender leaves the hex and the attackers bayonet the air, and when routed units execute neat wheels and march smartly away. It can also be frustrating when the view switches to the next commander before combat is finished.

Blunt Bayonet

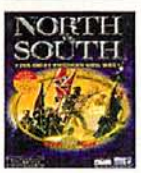
If the gameplay were good, the other irritants wouldn't matter so much. But NVS is too much like GREAT BATTLES in that fire combat is still only preparatory to melee, despite the fact that the American Civil War demonstrated the uselessness of charges against rifle fire. Also, Civil War units didn't break and run as ancient troops did; they often took fire, fell back, and regrouped many times. Yet, in NVS, units are terminally routed after an unsuccessful rally attempt (or just at the end of a turn). So how are you supposed to recreate Antietam or Chancellorsville?

The scenarios are also a letdown, with many of the important battles missing in action. The campaigns just link things together, with no carryover from one battle to another. Thus, a Northern victory at the First Bull Run still gives them only McClellan on the peninsula instead of the more likely early end of the war.

In the end, NVS falls short both as a serious simulation and as a fun beer-and-pretzels wargame. With TalonSoft's Civil War series still available (see the May *CGW* Hall of Fame), there's no reason to waste time with this. CGW

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★½☆☆☆



PROS: A fast-playing brigade-level Civil War game.

CONS: Looks bad, plays poorly, isn't historical, and isn't fun.

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 166, 16MB RAM, 154MB hard-drive space.

3D SUPPORT: None.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: Hotseat, modem, LAN (1–2 players); 1 CD per player.

Price: $39.95
Publisher: Interactive Magic

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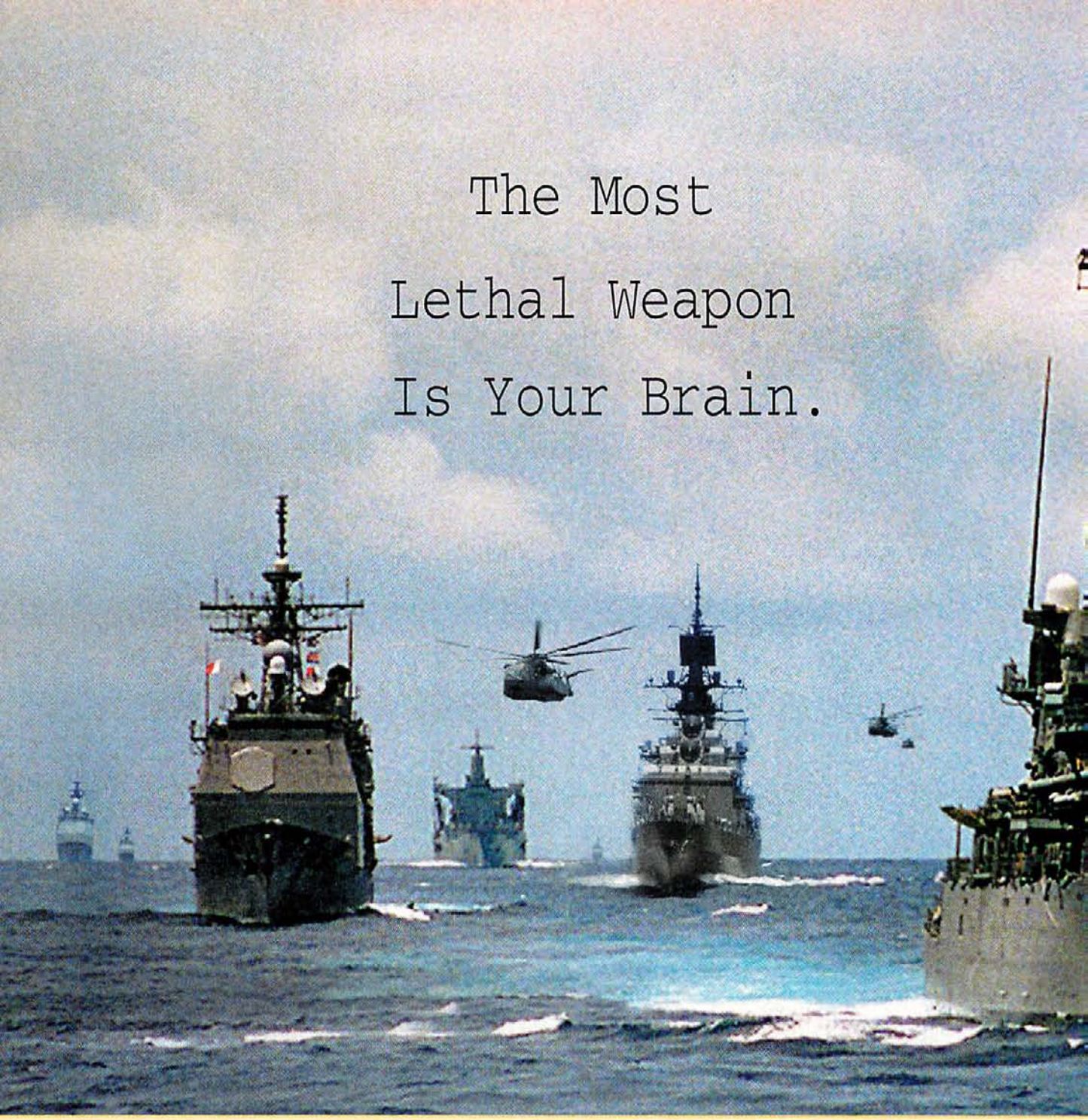
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LIGHTNING ST



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for
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- "If you missed *Seven Kingdoms* last year, you missed the best strategy game in a long time."
  – PC Gamer
  (Review Score: 90%, Recipient: Editor's Choice Award)

- "Like Chan's *Capitalism*, *Seven Kingdoms* is deep, complex, and challenging. ★★★★"
  – Computer Gaming World

- "The detail in *Seven Kingdoms* makes *Age of Empires* look like checkers."
  – GamePower

- "★★★★"
  – Computer Games Strategy Plus



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GOVERN



Trevor Chan is the creator of advanced strategy games like *Capitalism*, *Seven Kingdoms*, and *Seven Kingdoms Ancient Adversaries*. Although only 25, Chan operates his own game design studio, overseeing all aspects of production at Hong Kong-based Enlight Software (www.enlight.com).

INTERACTIVE MAGIC

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SimCity 3000

Can't Urban Plan Your Way Out of a Paper Bag? We Can Help!

by Marc Dultz

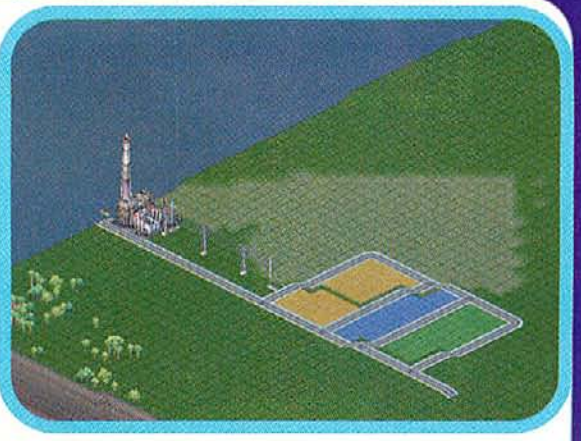
SIMCITY 3000 is unquestionably one of the most challenging simulations around, aptly modeling the growth of a city from its embryonic beginnings into a bustling metropolis. The first 25 years or so represent the most difficult phase of the game, because it is during this period that you must successfully lay the groundwork for your ideal city. At the outset, you must determine where to locate neighborhoods, workplaces, and industries; decide which city services you will provide to your inhabitants; and implement a plan of action that will ensure steady growth of the community. Here are some tips on accomplishing your lofty goals—without bankrupting the city coffers or turning your administration out onto the streets.

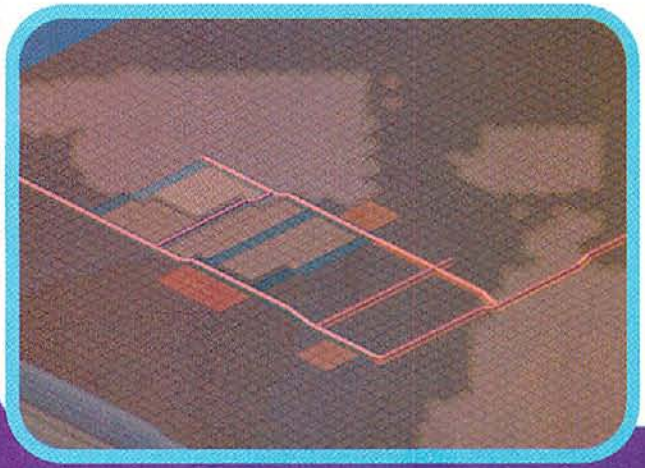
In the Zone

Obviously, the first item on the agenda

is to decide where to set up shop. Early on, it makes sense to establish only light residential, commercial, and industrial zones instead of medium or densely populated zones, since these are cheaper to create. While you can cram more people into a medium or densely populated zone, these areas also take far longer to fully occupy and have far lower land values.

Plan on placing your industrial parks somewhere along the edge of the map, preferably close to your power plants and far enough away from your residential and commercial districts so that they don't lower land value. Residential zones should be created near waterways, lakes, or atop hills, because these types of terrain will generally have a positive effect on their land value. Commercial zones should be placed nearby, with schools, fire departments, police stations, and hospitals in close proximity.





Once your residential, commercial, and industrial zones have been created, your next task is to provide both water and power to them. Start out by placing a pumping station near a body of fresh water (preferably along a river or on the shore of a lake), then construct a water main that leads from your pumping station to each of your newly formed zones. Pipes can be spaced at least seven tiles apart and still provide plenty of water to each of your zones. If it still appears as if some zones aren't receiving their fair share of water, you may want to construct a few water towers nearby or perhaps connect one of your water mains to a neighboring community so that you can pump in additional water.

Unlike SIMCITY 2000, you need not erect power lines all over the map in order to keep the juice flowing. In fact, most buildings will draw power from distant power plants if the buildings are simply situated near another fully powered zone.

See the Review MAY ISSUE • 4 STARS

Let's Make a Deal



Have Smoke, Will Travel

During the early stages of the game, pollution is by far one of your most pressing concerns. Pollution generally comes in three forms—air, ground, and water. Depending upon where it occurs, pollution can lower the value of land, retard growth of the city, and turn away city dwellers by the droves.

From time to time, your neighbors will

propose all sorts of deals to you, such as purchasing excess power and importing garbage. If you're in dire straits, they may even offer to pump in potable water, albeit at an exorbitant cost. Unless the terms of these arrangements are utterly outrageous, it makes sense to take them up on their offers as quickly as possible before they decide to rescind the proposal. The short-term benefits of these deals often will outweigh the long-term costs; besides, you can always cancel the contract at a later date if it looks as though the deal is starting to go sour.

Check with your financial advisor to see what types of ordinances you can enact. Early on, pass any ordinances that will generate income, such as parking fines and legalized gambling. While such ordinances tend to upset your populace and lower your popularity, your most immediate concerns are to stimulate growth and establish a positive cash flow. You can always strike down these ordinances later if they are doing more harm than good.

Although some legislation will end up costing you money, you should still enact these ordinances as quickly as possible, since they will generally allow you to build certain structures or hasten the availability of other ordinances. For instance, the passage of the shuttle ordinance permits you to build slightly larger residential, commercial, and industrial zones (one extra tile each), which means that you can create larger zones and far fewer roads.





Other ordinances, such as the passage of a junior reading program, will generally raise the education level of your populace and improve their happiness, making it more attractive for other sims to move into your community. The creation of a maximum-security prison makes sense too, since this will bring in additional revenue at a time when you can use it most. Because prisons and jails drastically lower neighboring land value, they should be sited in low-value areas along the edge of the map, where their adverse impact will be severely lessened.

Riding the Rails

In addition to a decent neighborhood, your sims require a viable transportation system so that they can travel from one destination to another. While some sims don't mind walking to the corner Quickie Mart every so often, most would rather drive or ride the rails than hoof it, since this will appreciably cut down their travel time.

Resist the urge to build an extensive network of roads, since this will only lead to higher maintenance costs and greater traffic congestion. Instead, create an above-ground rail system that parallels your most frequently traveled routes and intersects at key junctures. Place train stations at regular intervals alongside the tracks, locating them within walking range of each major residential, commercial, and industrial zone.



Make sure to leave ample room for the rail system to expand, so that it can efficiently and effectively meet the demands of your citizens. It's also a good idea to connect your rail system to as many neighbors as possible since this will enable more sims to quickly move into your community.



Later on, as land values rise and new modes of transport become available, it may be wise to build an underground subway system that mirrors your rail system. When subway ridership increases, you can then think about tearing up the above-ground rail system and replacing it with a network of roads capable of supporting bus traffic. Be sure to place bus stops at random intervals, as close as possible to any subway stations.

Knowledge Is Power

Early on, the only power sources available are coal and oil-based power plants. Although coal plants are cheaper to purchase and operate and produce slightly more power, they emit far more pollutants than oil plants. So, unless your city desperately needs power, stick with oil, at least until gas-powered plants come online.





Like landfill sites, power plants should be situated in the corners of the map or along its outer edges so that their pollutants "drift" off the map instead of into your community. At the map edges, power plants will also be ideally situated to supply unused power to nearby communities.

Finally, it should be pointed out that power plants start to decline with age, operating at less than peak efficiency as the years pass by. If they do break down, power plants spew even more waste into the surrounding region, which can lead to all sorts of problems. Every so often, it would be wise to check on the condition of your power plants, replacing decrepit plants with newer power sources.

Whose Trash Is This Anyway?

Unless you are prepared to export garbage to a neighboring community (not a good idea considering the cost) the next most logical recourse is to create a landfill, placing it in a corner of the map where it won't affect your main urban center. Landfills are some of the worst polluters, and left unchecked, can become serious blights on the urban landscape.

In terms of zoning costs, landfills are also fairly expensive, so keep your initial site small and well out of range of the nearest inhabitants. Try to allocate a large enough tract of land to accommodate any future site expansion, making sure to leave some space vacant for an incinerator when it becomes available.





While landfills are obviously eyesores, they do have their benefits. Neighboring communities will routinely offer to export their garbage into your community, paying a fairly handsome fee to rid themselves of their unwanted waste. So, while importing garbage may seem like a fairly unattractive option, the extra income will prove handy when expenditures outstrip revenues.

Later on, as your bottom line improves, you can always rescind those heartless waste management contracts. If things are going especially well, you can even dismantle your landfills and export garbage into someone else's backyard, reducing the pollution level and perhaps causing more sims to move into your community!

Break the Bank

If your city is in dire need of funding, or if an attractive opportunity presents itself, it makes good sense for you to turn to the banks for a low-interest loan. Since you can have only 10 outstanding loans at any one time, it's wise to borrow the maximum amount allowable ($25,000), although it'll cost you something on the order of $30,000 to pay it back in full.



Loans should be used as an immediate stopgap measure or to finance key projects such as the construction of a backup power plant or water tower, and should never be used to pay off other outstanding loans. It's easy to get into a situation in which you have multiple outstanding loans and no hope of ever digging out from under all that red ink.



While the advent of clean industry will lower pollution levels much later in the game, the planting of trees and the establishment of parks will have a much more immediate effect and will help to reduce emission levels throughout your city.

Remember that even Rome wasn't built in a day. And while the first 25 years or so in SIMCITY 3000 are troubling times even for veteran players, overcoming this stumbling block means that you're well on your way to creating the ultimate utopia. CGW

Myth II: Soulblighter

Applying the Principles of War for Online Success

See the Review
APRIL ISSUE • 4.5 STARS

by Raphael Liberatore

Draw your swords, string your bows, prime your mortars, and prepare your spells, because we're gathering around the war table to discuss MYTH II multiplayer strategy and tactics. With MYTH II's fast-paced multiplayer options, victory depends on your ability to make quick tactical decisions, utilize fine-tuned skills, and employ surefire strategies.

The Importance of UNIT TRADING



ATTENTION! Strategy starts with unit selection. Winning depends on having the right mix of units and the right units for the game and map you'll be playing.

Strategy starts with unit trading. One consideration is mix of units: Choosing the best combination of troops for your army is a factor of paramount importance for victory. Another is the game type and map being played: Choose units best suited for specific games and maps.

Units in MYTH II fall into four categories: recon, melee, missile, and special units. Units like Berserks, Giant Myrkridia, and Bre'Unor overlap two categories.



Recon units like Ghöls, Spiders, Myrkridia, and Berserks are the fastest units of the game. They're used primarily for scouting, skirmishing, harassing, and/or grabbing an undefended flag or ball.

Melee units such as Berserks, Myrkridia, Giant Myrkridia, Heron Guards, Bre'Unor, Trow, Thrall, and Warriors are the nucleus of your army. Melee units have three functions: Support missile and special units, defend a flag or ball, and strike the enemy when an old-fashioned infantry assault is needed. When a particular strategy calls for defensive tactics, melee units should make up the bulk of your force.

Missile units are probably the most underrated of the categories. They provide support for direct assaults and are perfect for protecting your army against Ghöls, Wights, Dwarves, or Warlocks.

LOSING 101 Even though the archers are at a good elevation, the Warriors should be flanking them on both sides for protection. Here, the Ghols can claw past the archers to assassinate the poorly protected peasants.



Depending on the game type, choosing a balance of melee and missile units provides a strong force for any task.

Special units like Dwarves, Mortar Dwarves, Warlocks, and Fetch are easily the coolest units. With their ability to inflict damage on massive areas, they make a nice complement to any army. New players tend to load up on Dwarves, Fetch, and Warlocks, but they soon learn that there's a downside: They're the trickiest and hardest to master of all the unit categories, requiring an incredible amount of focus and energy. They also have a tendency to get killed easily. What's more, their explosions can't tell friend from foe; while it's not a good idea to let them wander too far from the main body of forces, it's also unwise to let them huddle too close to your army.

WHAT'S A GIMBLE? With more than 21 multiplayer maps to choose from—in addition to single-player game maps—you must get to know maps like Gimble in the Wabe and the games they best support.



MELEE GAMES

Body Count In this most popular of MYTH's multiplayer games, the player or team with the most kills and/or total damage wins. Start out with a mix of recon, missile, melee, and special units. Units that pack a wallop, like Dwarves, Wights, and Warlocks, are ideal. Try to pick a good balance of melee troops but keep the slower-moving Thrall to a minimum: Vulnerable to explosions, Thrall will give opponents the points needed to win. Take the offensive by scouting the map with your recon units, looking for favorable terrain, enemy weaknesses, exposed flanks, or players locked in combat, then take the initiative and exploit them. Most Body Count games are decided within the first several minutes, so don't hold back for too long.

Last Man on the Hill The player or team in possession of the flag at the center of the map when time runs out wins. Pick troops with good defensive posturing—special and melee units are optimal choices. Timing is everything here: Experienced players wait till the last possible minute before launching a well-planned assault, en masse, on the flag. Here's another good tactic: After gaining the flag in the waning seconds, send out small groups of units, a couple at a time, to slow down and prevent other units from contesting your flag.

King of the Hill The player or team holding the flag at the center for the longest period of time wins. It's a tricky game that requires constant maneuvering on an ever-fluid battlefield. Launch a concerted effort toward seizing the flag early on. After you gain the flag, expect a barrage of attacks from all sides. Move your forces to a defensive perimeter near the base of the flag while creating one or two quick-response teams, composed of recon and melee units, for added maneuvering. Use recon units to skirmish with advancing armies to slow them down. It's wise to be flexible, so yield the flag to superior forces and regroup for another attack.

Assassin The object is to assassinate your opponent's unit or group of units (usually a hapless baron) while protecting yours at the same time. Assassinating a baron causes that player's army to disappear from the map. In addition to searching for enemy barons, your primary objective is to protect your baron at all costs, so keep defensive units nearby. Send an attacking force of recon and special units to scour the map for targets, assassinating an opponent's baron when their forces are locked in battle with someone else and aren't prepared for an assault.

Hunting The player or team killing the most neutral units (deer, birds, or peasants) wins. The strategy for this wild but fun game hinges on staying focused on your objective to kill neutral units. Don't get caught up trying to attack other units unless the opportunity exists. Trade for units that are fast but can protect themselves if attacked by an opponent's hunting party. Avoid spreading your units thin in search of prey; chances are they'll get killed. Form two or three hunting parties and multitask them in a counterclockwise or clockwise direction, each group within bowshot of the other.

Stampede You must successfully guide your herd of pigs to the center of the map for teleportation (some game types provide the enemy flag as the teleportation point). The winner is the player or team herding the most pigs off the map. In this game, quickly split your force into two groups, the first consisting of recon, missile, and melee units; the second, of slow-moving melee and special units. Charge your first group to the teleportation point so you can keep other players from herding their pigs to safety. This also gives you an opportunity to secure the teleportation point. At the same time, use your second group to quickly herd your pigs toward the point. The first players to herd their pigs to the center usually meet with little resistance. Remember to protect your pigs while killing as many of the opponents' pigs as possible.



SEARCH AND DESTROY Ghols make excellent recon units. In this game of Assassin, the Ghols quickly scouted a group of peasants trying to hide, with minimal protection, in the corner of the map. Farewell, peasants.

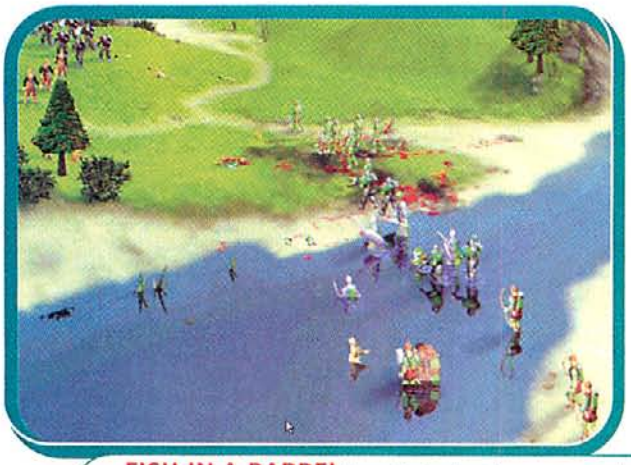


YEE-HAAW! In Stampede, move your herd to the flag before anyone else in order to secure the teleportation area and gain the upper hand.



MINED YOUR STEP You don't have to engage in hand-to-hand combat to protect a flag in Last Man on the Hill—just place satchel charges around the flag and wait for victims to walk into your trap.







FISH IN A BARREL Be on the lookout for opponents who bait you into traps. This player blundered badly, twice: He passed close to a deep body of water in which Wights were lurking and then got caught downhill from a force of deadly Archers and Dwarves.

FLAG GAMES



STEP RIGHT UP The Soulless are great missile units because of their ability to travel across impassable terrain. Deploy Soulless along the side of a hill near a heavily traversed corridor and watch the bodies pile up.

Flag Rally The player or team who touches all flags wins. For this fast-paced contest, stock up on recon and quick-moving melee units. Quickly take the offensive and send your recon units to touch all the flags. Move your army en masse to each flag, destroying resistance along the way while redirecting recon units to grab unclaimed flags.

You can also play defense by sending out your defensive units to grab other flags while at the same time you keep the bulk of your army behind in order to guard your main flag.

Capture the Flag The player or team capturing the most flags while maintaining possession of their own flag wins. Select a good balance of forces for multitasking. Split your forces into two groups, keeping defensive units behind to guard your flag while attacking with the rest of your forces. Recon the map in search of exposed flags and/or weakened opponents. Try sneaking your units past the defense of another player while he's engaged in combat, and touch the flag.

Territories There are several flags scattered throughout the map, and the player or team controlling the most flags when time runs out wins. For this pure strategy game, a balanced force of recon, melee, missile, and special units is required.

The best overall strategy is to methodically capture and hold as many flags as possible without spreading your army too thin. For best results, it's a good idea to split your army into three main forces for multitasking, but make sure you keep each force within supporting distance of each other, should a large enemy force attack. Send your recon units across the map to exploit enemy weakness and/or take unguarded flags. In the final minute of the game, make a concerted push to capture flags.



SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

Keep your eye on the minimap for players engaged with other opponents, then exploit the situation. This single Warlock decimated an unsuspecting force while the player was busy fighting on the other side of the map.



protected. Just as you need to protect your baron in Assassin, in this game you must secure your ball or you'll be eliminated. Try to pick a mix of forces for defending and attacking. As in Steal the Bacon, actively search for opportunities to sneak in recon units while others are locked in combat. Try using

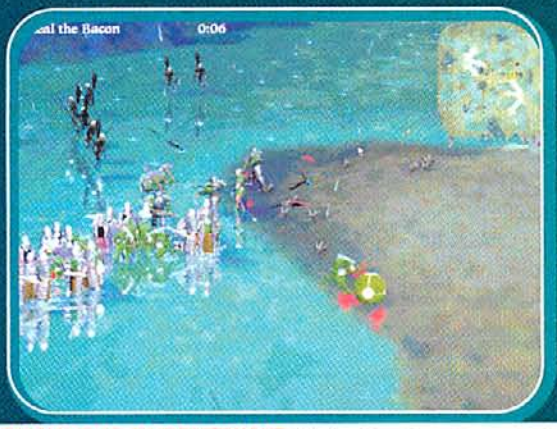
HIGHPOINT AT THE OK CORRAL Position your missile troops at high elevation so that their attacks will go farther and be more accurate. Here, Archers receive an exploding gift complete with shards and fragments.

Steal the Bacon The player or team with possession of the "bacon" (an oversized mobile soccer ball) when time runs out wins. As in Last Man on the Hill, the key here is to conserve your forces till the end. Let others battle it out, and avoid combat at all costs unless an exposed flank looks tasty. Wait until the last minute before launching a focused attack on the ball holder's forces. During the battle, maneuver recon units to sneak in and grab the ball. If you get the ball early on, dribble the ball to a defensible position. Depending on the terrain, sometimes you can dribble or blast the ball to the side of a hill or onto deep impassable water for added protection.

Balls on Parade Each player or team begins with a mobile ball that must be

Ghöls, Myrkridia, and Berserks for stealing opponents' balls.

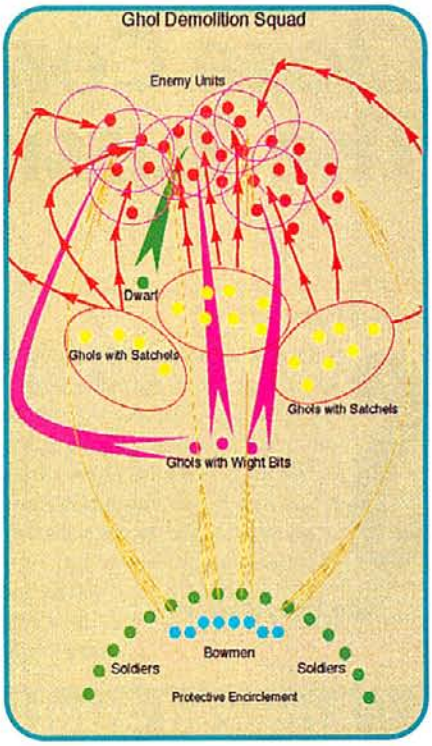
Scavenger Hunt Several movable balls are scattered throughout the map. The first player or team to touch all balls wins. This game gets chaotic, so it's smart to choose a balanced force. Load up with recon units, because opportunities to snatch unguarded balls will occur and you'll need the fastest troops to get at them. Use small teams to get as many balls as possible before your opponents do. On defense, dribble balls out of your opponents' grasp and keep them near your troops for protection.



Captures Several mobile balls are placed throughout the map. The player or team possessing the most balls when time runs out wins. The strategy is similar to that of Territories, but rather than spreading your army thin trying to capture that game's flags, here you have the option of using fast recon units to obtain and bring back as many unguarded balls as possible to a defensible, secured position. You should use your recon units to constantly roam the map in search of balls without engaging the enemy, but—as in other Bacon games—you should always keep a sharp eye out for opportunities to ambush the enemy. Make your big push just before the end of the game by maneuvering two or three groups of troops toward as many balls as possible. CGW

TIMING IS EVERYTHING Playing MYTH II requires not only strategy and skill but also cunning—and a bit of luck. In the final seconds of this team Steal the Bacon game, a skilled team member sneaked his Ghöl into the fray and dribbled the ball away unnoticed.

BALL GAMES



Mapping Things Out

Line up your archers, preferably on a hill or elevation, with soldiers in a protective encirclement. Load up your ghöls, shown in yellow, with satchels then send them in groups to saturate the enemy as deeply as possible with satchels (noted by the red arrow lines). Three preset ghöl groups, represented in red circles, work well for flanking and penetrating the enemy positions.

Once you've gotten the satchels in, you have three choices for setting them off: Bowmen (gold arrows) shooting flaming arrows; a group of ghöls with wight bits or dwarven mortars (though you risk having them cut down by archers or soldiers); or dwarven mortar or a standard dwarf can set them off (riskier since dwarves are slow and cost a lot).

With practice, this can be a devastating maneuver.

For movies of this and other MYTH II tactics, check out this month's CG-ROM.

Close Combat III: The Russian Front

Battle Tactics for the War in the East

by Marc Dultz

Spanning nearly four years, Germany's *Russlandkrieg*, or War in Russia, proved to be one of the longest and most ferocious military campaigns of the Second World War, locking two powerful armies in a life-or-death struggle to determine the fate of Europe. In CLOSE COMBAT III, you get a sense of what it was like to soldier on the war's inhospitable eastern frontier, dashing across the vast open steppes of the Ukraine one moment, only to inch your way through the thick defensive belts surrounding Moscow and Stalingrad the next.

See the Review
MAY ISSUE • 3.5 STARS

It's easy to fall into the trap of using the same cadre of units and a similar set of battle tactics for every conceivable circumstance, rarely taking into account the enormity of the situation or the disparate forces under each side's command. Such a formulaic approach avails you little in the campaign's more formidable scenarios. To succeed, then, you must draw up a sound contingency plan for every type of engagement: a plan of action that will marry the right mix of forces with the correct battle tactics to produce the best possible results.

What follows then are some general guidelines and techniques for the conduct of offensive military operations in CLOSE COMBAT III, all drawn from the Wehrmacht's experience in the Russian campaign. Bear in mind that certain factors, such as troop strength, terrain, weather, and the disposition of the opposing forces, will have to be weighed and carefully considered before a definitive plan of action can be put into effect.

Armored Attacks

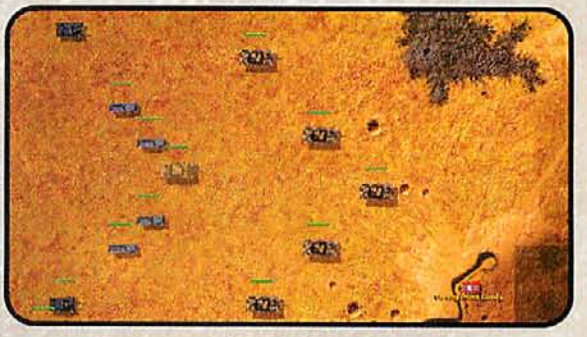
Armored forces (tanks, assault guns, half-tracks, and other mechanized units) play a much more vital role in CLOSE COMBAT III than in previous installments of the series. In many instances they are forced to shoulder the brunt of the fighting. Armored forces are typically employed to maintain the momentum of the attack, are often called upon to rupture a defensive line, and, when the case warrants, are charged with destroying enemy armored concentrations on the battlefield.

During the war, panzer commanders deployed their mobile reconnaissance units well ahead of the armored advance in order to establish the proximity of the nearest enemy forces, fixing their positions, numbers, and composition in preparation for the main assault. Typically, motorcycles, fast-moving armored cars, or half-tracks were employed in this role, with two vehicles working in tandem to ascertain the enemy's whereabouts. Ordinarily one vehicle would move as swiftly as possible from one area of concealment to the next while the second stood off a few hundred yards to the rear, ready to provide covering fire in case the first vehicle came under attack. If the lead vehicle happened to be destroyed, the second vehicle would withdraw in earnest, then assist with the screening of the main assault or in locating any nearby enemy armored units. Whenever possible, reconnaissance units would attempt to occupy the highest ground, such as a ridge line or a hill, thereby giving them the best vantage point to survey the surrounding countryside.





Once the composition and disposition of the enemy's forces had been established, the main armored force would assume a battle formation. Typically, light and medium panzers would spearhead the attack, with the trailing elements—mechanized units, assault guns, towed as well as self-propelled artillery, and trucks—forming the second and third waves of the assault group. The battalion commander, usually leading the assault at the head of the second wave, would determine each phase of the attack, based upon the outcome of the initial meeting engagement, the progress of the lead elements as they passed through the defensive line, and the overall mission goals. The vanguard, supported by artillery fire and field pieces, would either push on into the enemy's rear areas or would be ordered to encircle then annihilate the enemy in a bold pincer movement.



Units assigned to the second wave of the assault were charged with protecting the armored forces should any enemy armor appear on the battlefield. Towed antitank teams and heavily armored assault guns were deployed along either flank of the attack, ready to turn back local armored counterattacks. If infantry or antitank teams were harassing the lead elements, mechanized infantry units would immediately dismount from their vehicles and engage these units, forcing them to ground until the armor could destroy them. Generally, units in the second wave were used to mop up any remaining enemy resistance that the armor had bypassed. However, as the conflict dragged on, and newer, much more lethal tank destroyers were introduced by the Red Army, units in the second wave were oftentimes held in reserve for extended periods of time, until the armor could outflank and eliminate these threats.

Prior to and even during the opening stages of the assault, a short yet intense rolling artillery barrage would be launched, targeted at both known and suspected antitank gun sites as well as mortar and artillery positions. When the attack commenced, friendly artillery batteries and mortar teams would fire smoke ahead of the armored units, screening their advance as they crossed the open ground. Meanwhile, field guns were usually sited along tree lines or on hilltops ready to provide standoff fire should the armored forces require further assistance. Once the enemy's antitank guns had been silenced, some of the armored units and field artillery would direct their fire against any enemy machine-gun teams or rifle squads in the area, so that dismounted infantry could approach, engage, and destroy these holdouts.



River Crossing Operations

In many respects, the seizure of a river crossing shares certain similarities with the attack on a fortified line. A specialized assault team must be created from several different types of units, a battle group that will usually consist of field artillery, armored cars, mortars, machine-gun teams, tanks, and both light and heavy infantry.

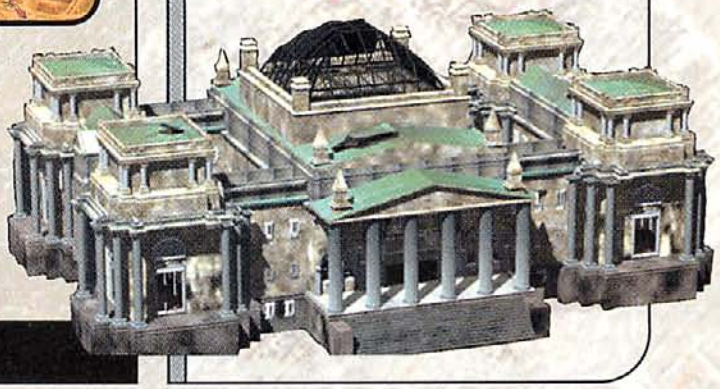
Typically, the enemy will attempt to defend a river crossing by withdrawing his forces over the bridge to guard the more defensible span. Since landing craft and other troop-ferrying equipment aren't available in the game, the attacker must somehow attempt to get his forces across the bridge in the most expeditious manner possible and then establish a defensible lodgment. Again, speed, artillery, smoke, and overwhelming firepower are critical to the operation.

Prior to battle, reconnaissance units should immediately occupy any high ground that overlooks the river crossing. The recon teams, acting as artillery observers, will then be able to call in accurate artillery fire against any observable troop concentrations within the immediate area. Tanks and field artillery should also take up positions atop ridges, inside tree lines, or behind buildings, so that they too can support the attack. Finally, light and heavy infantry squads should be placed as close as possible to the bridge, preferably in concealed terrain, from which they can swiftly move out and onto the bridge.



Once everyone is in position, mortar teams should fire smoke canisters along the opposite riverbank, usually near the entrance to the bridge. Once the smoke screen thickens, machine-gun teams should immediately begin to rake the opposite embankment, keeping the defenders busy while the assault troops press forward. At this point in the battle, an armored car or half-track can speed down the road and over the bridge, stirring up as much havoc as possible on the opposite riverbank. Next, two teams of light infantry race across the bridge, then take up defensive positions on either side of the bridge. Finally, tanks and heavy infantry squads storm the bridge, fanning out in all directions once they reach the opposite riverbank, quickly eliminating any enemy forces still operating near the bridgehead.





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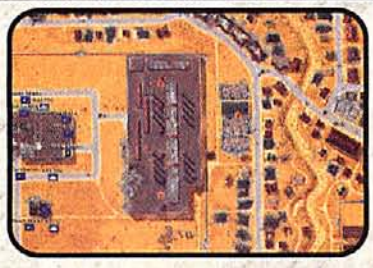
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Urban Combat

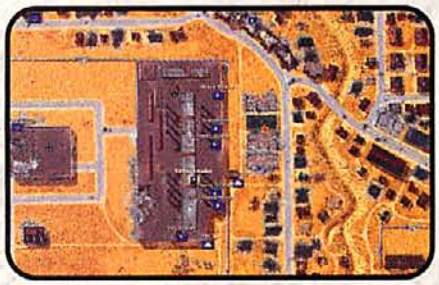
During the war, armored forces were usually withheld from the opening phase of an urban assault because they were extremely vulnerable to close-quarter fighting. Antitank teams occupying the upper floors of a multistory building were ideally situated, able to fire down at an approaching vehicle's top, where its armor was the thinnest. Moreover, specially formed tank-hunting units were trained to infiltrate sections of town already lost to the attacker, then fire at a tank from behind. As a result, infantry units were generally used to spearhead the main assault, with tanks and other fighting vehicles accompanying the second wave to bolster the attack. Armored units were used to smash barricades and act as mobile artillery, supporting the infantry units as they cleared out each section of town.



German forces tended to employ flanking or encircling tactics to bypass a major strongpoint, preferring to reduce them with withering artillery fire rather than attack directly. In some instances, armored cars and half-tracks would speed through a village in order to take up positions just beyond the town limits. The idea here was to block the defenders' retreat route if they attempted to withdraw.

The ultimate objective in urban combat was to divide the defending forces, then isolate them from each other, denying them any freedom of movement and reducing their overall cohesiveness. Assault troops were divided up into several columns, which would then make a series of coordinated attacks following parallel routes. Each column would be further subdivided into an assault group and a mop-up detachment, which were typically composed of reconnaissance troops, engineers, and various infantry squads.

When maneuvering, the Germans would attempt to avoid the streets as much as possible, infiltrating the enemy's positions via backyards, over roofs, and through sewers. Tall multistory buildings were always seized first because these dominating positions provided the men with key observation points from which to survey nearby streets and the widest field of fire should the enemy attempt to redeploy. When a section of town was finally surrounded, every exit and side street was quickly blocked to prevent the defenders from escaping. Mop-up detachments would then proceed house by house, clearing any remaining resistance while machine-gun teams and other units stood off to provide suppression fire.



Panzers Vorwarts!



The wedge, or "arrowhead," formation was most frequently adopted because it provided the platoon commander with the greatest degree of flexibility during the attack. Each tank in the platoon was responsible for watching a specific arc, ensuring that at least one set of eyes was covering each sector of the front. Unfortunately, the wedge formation wasn't always the ideal formation. Tanks on one side of the wedge were generally unable to engage any enemy units located on the opposite side for fear of hitting their own vehicles. What's more, the platoon commander rode in the lead tank, which was usually the first vehicle to come under attack.

The blunt wedge, or "crescent," formation was regularly used because it offered each tank a good field of fire and typically didn't expose the lead vehicle to as much enemy fire as the wedge formation. However, because the command vehicle was located at the rear of the formation, the other tank commanders were unable to observe what the command tank was doing.



The echelon formation allowed the platoon commander to place the greatest volume of fire on either side of the formation. While each vehicle had a clear line of sight, the lead vehicle was exposed, oftentimes drawing the most enemy fire.



The line abreast formation was generally used when the platoon commander wanted to place fire on targets located in front of the formation. Unfortunately, the line abreast formation restricted each vehicle's line of fire, leaving them susceptible to flanking fire. Usually, this formation was adopted on the defense, where intervening terrain and other units could be used to protect each flank. CGW



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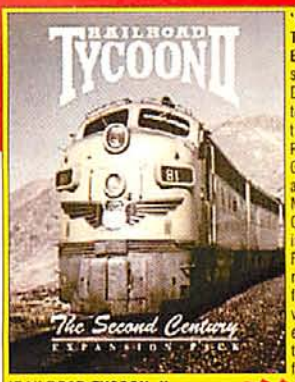
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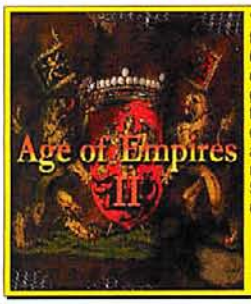


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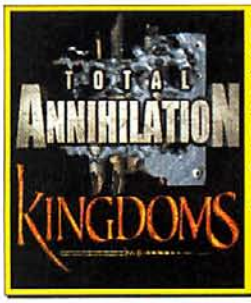
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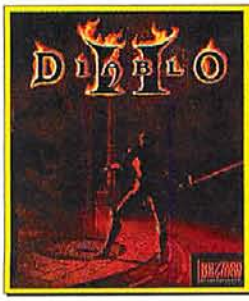
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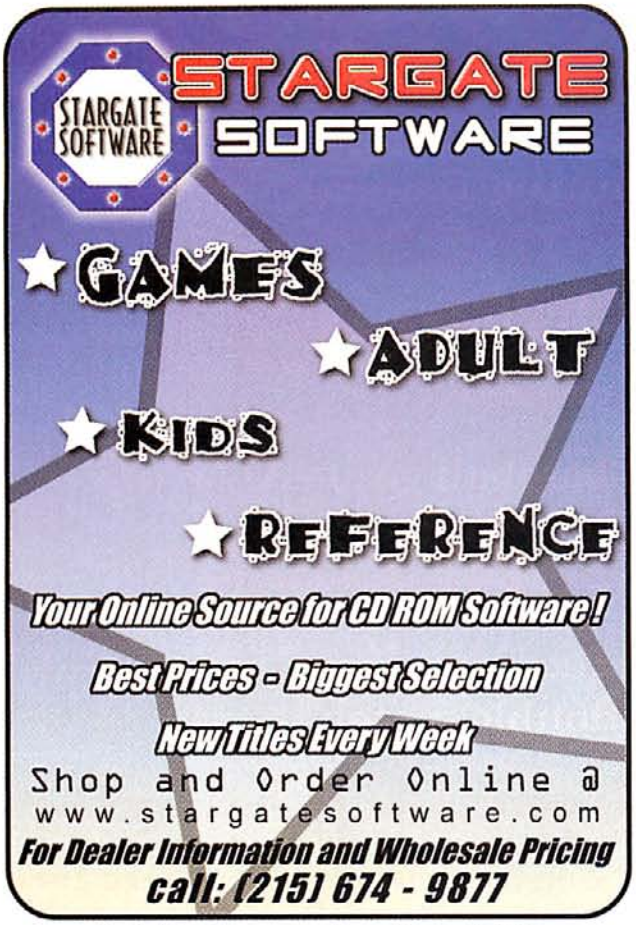
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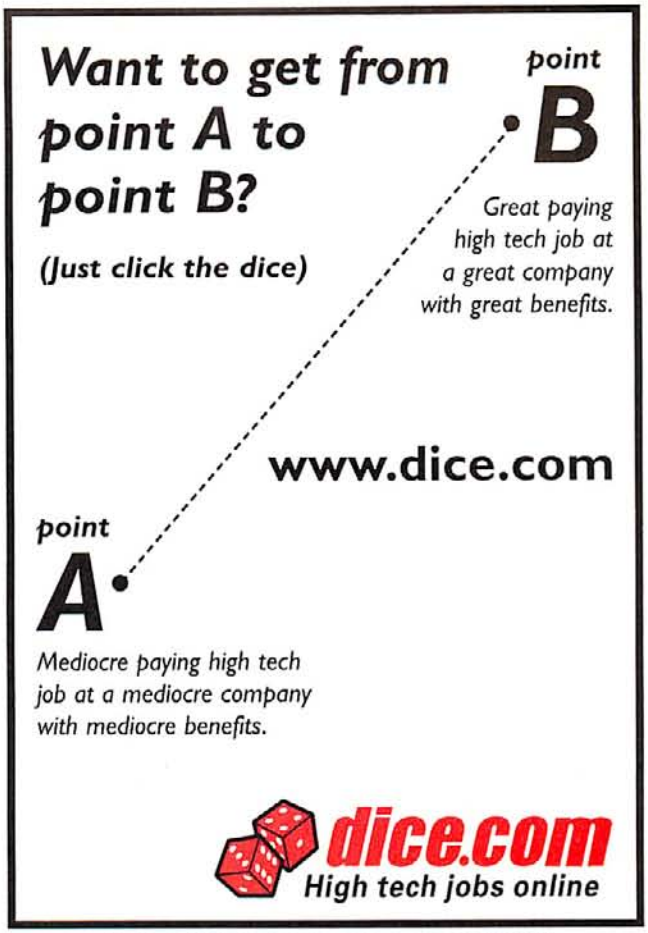
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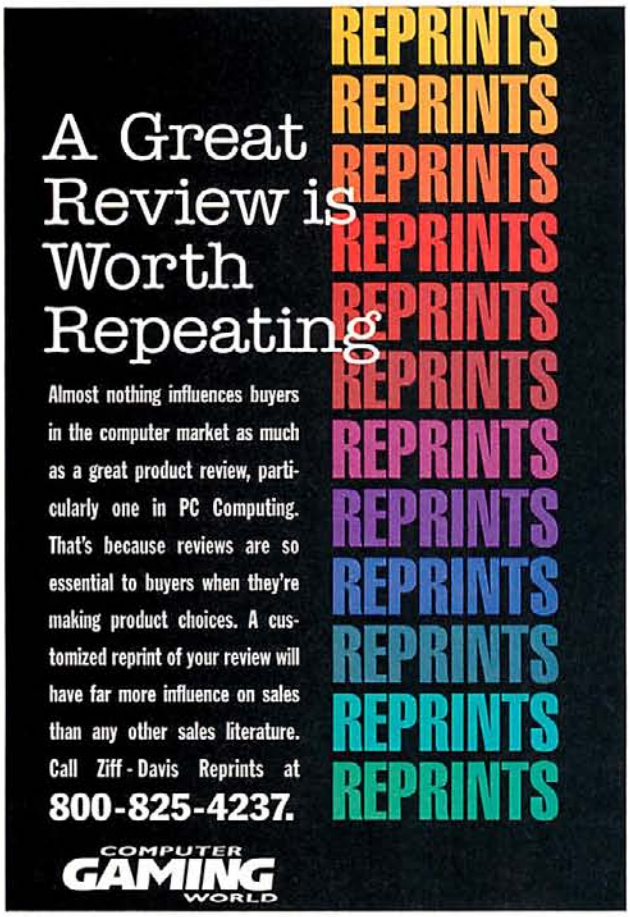
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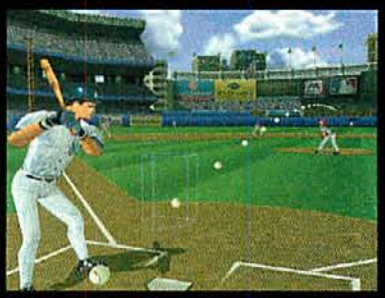
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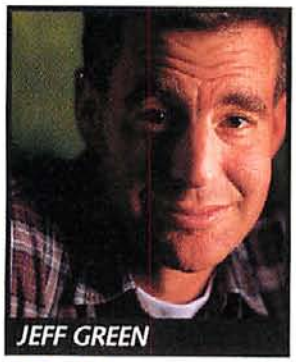
Such a Long, Long Time to Be Gone, and a Short Time to Be There

It takes a lot to shut up a smart-alecky loudmouth like myself, but this month I finally met my match. Yep, life's all fun and games here at *Computer Gaming World* (except for those annoying couple of days each month when we have to make this magazine), but this month reality gave me a Tyson-sized upper-cut, cold and hard, right in the kisser. And boy, I'd give anything to be able to write about anything else right now.

One minute I'm at the Game Developer's Conference in San Jose, attending sessions like "Are Adventure Games Dead?" (short answer: yes), and the next minute I find myself driving home at midnight in the rain, furiously hoping to beat the clock so I could say goodbye to my cousin Suzy—36 years old and dying of ovarian cancer—one last time.

I didn't make it.

In the face of such inexplicable, horrifying, incomprehensible news, how does one write a dumb column about computer games? Good question. I can't do it. For a while, I tried focusing and writing about my hopeless addiction to HEROES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC III. It was kind of funny, until I wrote something about needing an IV line and a bucket under my chair to take care of my bodily functions while I played. Then I thought about Suzy, and that line lost all its humor. Death—that heartless son of a bitch—just sucks all the humor out of everything.


JEFF GREEN

■ ■ ■

Or maybe not.

Suzy—my irrepressibly, stubbornly optimistic hippie Deadhead of a cousin—would have hated that idea. In her 36 brief years, Suzy never had the time to get maudlin like that. There was too much *fun* to be had. Not that she didn't work hard too; this is someone who actually chose, without someone holding a gun to her head, to teach social studies to the evil alien beings known as "7th graders." But she never lost sight of her main goal: *Have as much fun as possible, all the time.*

It's a good thing to remember. Actually, it's just good to remember that it's okay to want to have fun. Playing computer games, for example. This is a fun thing to do. We don't have to pretend that it's anything else, right? I hear people trying to justify their gaming habit all the time, but I'm here to tell you—don't even bother. You don't need to say, "It's better than TV." That's only partially true, anyway, but, more to the point, why should anything *have* to be better than TV? Life is hard enough. We're allowed to rest, we're allowed to goof off.

"I hear people trying to justify their gaming habit all the time, but I'm here to tell you—don't even bother."

Yeah, yeah, some games can manage to be educational, too, but save that for your parents or spouse. That's not why I play them, and I bet that's not why you play them either. Well, let me qualify that. Some gaming education is very important to me. Just yesterday, for example, I learned that it's way easier to beat someone over the head with a crowbar in HALF-LIFE than it is to keep reloading and firing the pistol. So I take it back. Games are very educational.

■ ■ ■

My point is this: Don't let anyone shame you into thinking that playing computer games is a waste of time. Because whatever they're doing to pass the time is no better—and it certainly isn't going to make them any less dead in the end. By all means, turn your computer off at least part of the day. Do your best to be a useful and responsible member of society, too. Plant a tree. Volunteer at a shelter. Help Ion Storm finish DAIKATANA. Just don't forget that when old Manny Calavera comes knocking at your door holding the big, black "Game Over" sign, you're not going to find a Restart button anywhere in your inventory.

So long, Suzy. Say hi to Jerry for me. Me, I've got some HEROES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC III to play. CGW

What Jeff doesn't realize is that Jerry Garcia currently holds the high score on the Ms. Pac Man machine in Heaven. Send your favorite magic brownie recipes to Jeff at jeff_green@zd.com.

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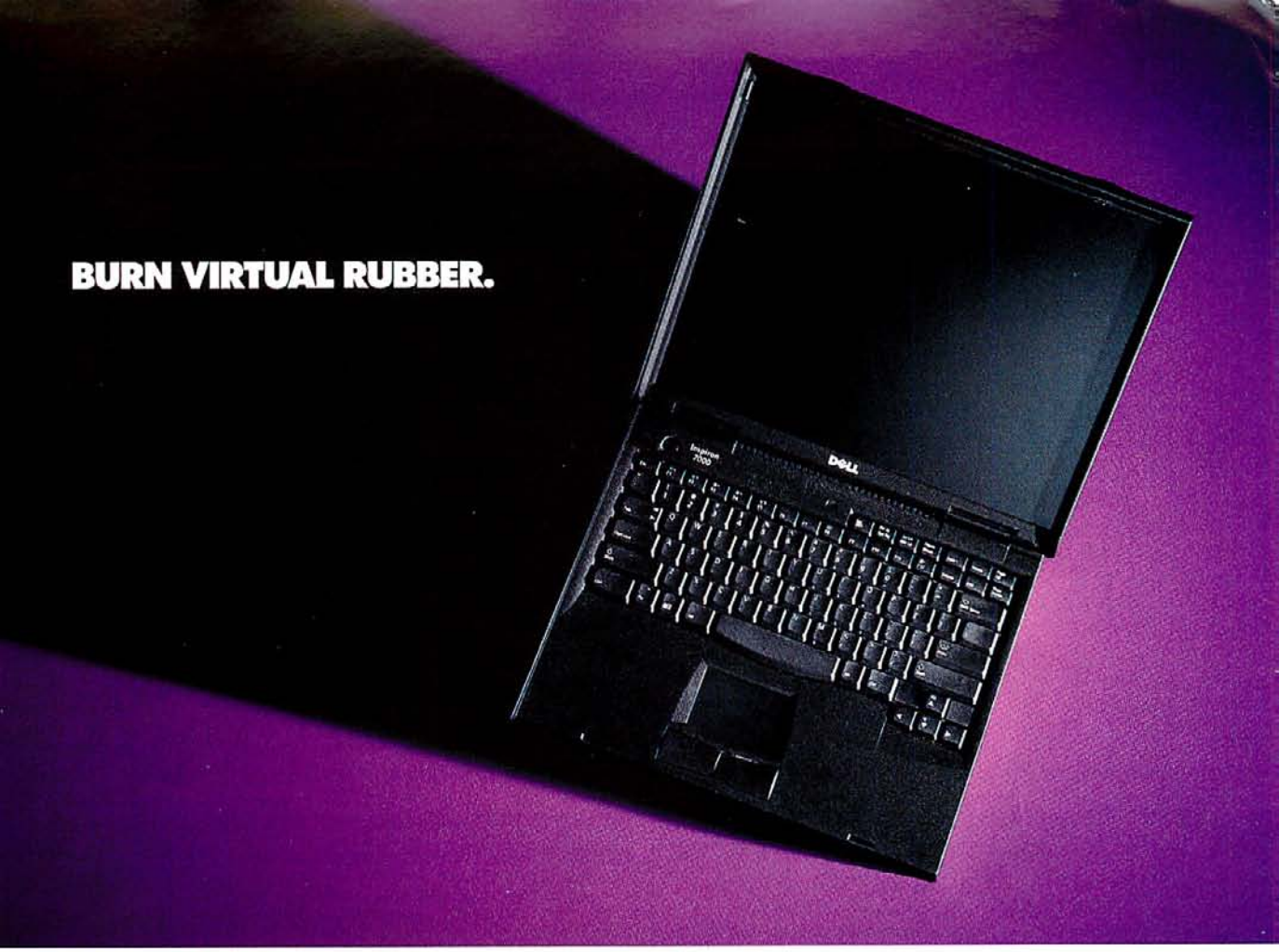
I've been reading your magazine for about seven years and it seems to tell the truth about a game. But the back page with Jeff Green seems to talk about nothing. I would, and perhaps a lot of other people would as well, like to read about the business and stock of some of the gaming companies out there. Who's getting rich and who's going out of business with perhaps some following about the companies—their stock prices and some news on software companies' IPOs, etc. Surely it would give some insight on why games sell and why games are shipped early. It can't be any more boring than Jeff. (Sorry Jeff.) It would be nice to read about who owns what in the business world. Surely one page is not too much.

—Ron Pierce via the Internet

Jeff Responds:

If you think I'm boring, you should read Denny Atkin's column.

Computer Gaming World (ISSN 0744-6667) is published monthly by ZD Inc. One Park Avenue, New York, NY 10016. Subscription rate is $27.97 for a one-year subscription (12 issues). Canada and all other countries add $16.00 for surface mail. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Computer Gaming World*, P.O. Box 57167, Boulder, CO 80328-7167. Canadian GST registration number is 89371 0442 RT. Canada Post International Pub's Mail Product (Canada Distribution) Sales Agreement No. 1058649. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY 10016 and additional mailing offices. **Printed in the U.S.A.**



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